



Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6621st meeting

 Thursday, 22 September 2011, 3 p.m.
 New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Sleiman	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Alkalaj
	Brazil	Mr. Patriota
	China	Mr. Yang Jiechi
	Colombia	Mr. Santos Calderón
	France	Mr. Juppé
	Gabon	Mr. Bongo Ondimba
	Germany	Mr. Westerwelle
	India	Mr. Krishna
	Nigeria	Mr. Jonathan
	Portugal	Mr. Coelho
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Zuma
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hague
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Conflict prevention

Report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy (S/2011/552)

 Letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of
 Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General
 (S/2011/570)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Conflict prevention

Report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy (S/2011/552)

Letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/570)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I warmly welcome the Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General, Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/552, containing the report of the Secretary-General on preventive diplomacy. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/570, containing a letter dated 12 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as President of the Republic of Lebanon.

First, I would like to welcome the Heads of State and Government and Ministers who accepted Lebanon's invitation to participate in this high-level meeting, thereby affirming the importance of our discussion on the subject of preventive diplomacy.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the report he has prepared to enrich our discussion. He has placed preventive diplomacy, which he considers to be one of the smartest investments we can make, among the top priorities of his second term. He is right to have done so, since investing in preventive diplomacy costs far less than conflicts and their

repercussions, not to mention the heavy humanitarian consequences they entail.

When addressing preventive diplomacy, we cannot but refer to the man who authored and developed this vision, the late Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, who was the first to work to integrate it into the United Nations system. The concept of preventive diplomacy has since evolved and is no longer restricted to simply pre-empting disputes before they erupt, but also aims at preventing conflicts from escalating or spreading, as described in the peace plan prepared by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. This concept is still evolving, and now extends to consolidating the pillars of peace after conflicts end and preventing the recurrence of those conflicts.

We firmly believe that wars and conflicts are not inevitable; rather, the course of events can be influenced to prevent their eruption and escalation. However, this requires political will, mobilizing the necessary resources, and adopting a clear preventive approach that reinforces local capacities, including building national systems capable of mediating, facilitating dialogue and containing tension.

In this context, after adopting its national entente document in 1991, Lebanon has been keen to consolidate the pact and spirit of concord in its approach to major national issues, and has resorted to national dialogue conferences and committees to promote an atmosphere of calm, moderation and stability.

In general, the particular circumstances of every conflict or crisis requires carefully selected preventive diplomacy instruments, including early warning, fact-finding, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. These are all instruments to be developed and promoted within the United Nations system.

Active prevention cannot be limited to State institutions, but should also extend to civil society bodies, particularly women's and youth organizations, media, universities and research centres, which can all play an important role in promoting a culture of prevention. Moreover, we must also ensure the coordination of prevention efforts among relevant United Nations entities.

We recall the Arab Peace Initiative to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in a just and comprehensive

manner that rejects any permanent refugee status for Palestinians in the Arab countries.

It is well known that peacekeeping operations constitute one of the tools of preventive diplomacy. Although they are conducted after a conflict erupts, they are highly important in containing the conflict and preventing it from spreading. This has been our own experience. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has, since its establishment in 1978, helped the Lebanese State to extend its sovereignty throughout its territory.

Similarly, the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), to which Lebanon is committed, was necessary to put an end to the destructive war Israel waged against Lebanon in 2006. The international community, in keeping with the requirements and objectives of preventive diplomacy, should strive to compel Israel to implement the resolution's provisions by fully withdrawing from all Lebanese territories and ceasing its threats and daily violations of Lebanon's sovereignty by land, sea and air.

Indeed, the conflict between Lebanon and Israel would not have escalated since 19 March 1978, the date resolution 425 (1978) was adopted, nor would the resistance have emerged and confronted the Israeli occupation, had the international community compelled Israel to fully implement that resolution, which clearly called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of its armed forces from all Lebanese territories. We need practical measures to guarantee that binding Security Council resolutions are implemented.

Preventive diplomacy cannot be fully successful unless we address the root causes of problems. The roots of terrorism must be addressed. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and reaffirm our commitment to fighting that scourge. Conflict prevention also calls for economic and social justice, as well as the establishment of a fairer and more equitable international economic and financial order that is better aligned with moral values and based less on speculation.

Finally, during its presidency of the Security Council last May, Lebanon pointed to dialogue among civilizations as a tool of preventive diplomacy. In this context, we emphasize that dialogue, communication and openness to others are the most important weapons against fanaticism, extremism, prejudice and hatred.

It is therefore clear that promoting a culture of peace will contribute to conflict prevention. The Preamble to the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states that it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed. Undoubtedly, the culture of peace cannot be separated from the culture of justice, without which no real or permanent peace can be achieved.

Talking about preventive diplomacy is much easier than implementing it. Furthermore, history records and at times even glorifies the wars and tragedies waged and caused by leaders more than those they manage to avert. Let us unite our efforts to create a world governed by the values of equality, justice and respect for others.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Preventive diplomacy's time has come once again. I am grateful to the presidency of Lebanon and to President Sleiman for this opportunity to take stock and chart the way forward. I also want to thank Nigeria, which helped re-energize and refocus our discussion on this issue during its presidency in July 2010.

When I took office almost five years ago, it was clear to me that we needed to raise our ability to act early and preventively against emerging threats to an entirely new level. Building on the ideas and accomplishments of my predecessors, I saw significant untapped potential for what we could help achieve through preventive diplomacy. We have sought to reinforce our missions abroad, strengthen our envoys and their teams, improve our expertise, deepen our partnerships and reshape the Department of Political Affairs to make this vision a reality.

Today, preventive diplomacy is being conducted by a broader array of actors, including regional and civil society organizations, using a wider and more innovative range of tools. There is growing global support for prevention, coupled with the creation of new preventive capacities in multilateral organizations and Member States. The pace, intensity and increasing professionalization of our preventive efforts are beginning to pay off. We have used diplomacy to

ensure a peaceful referendum in the Sudan, a democratic transition in Guinea, and an end to the violence in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan. From Afghanistan to the Middle East, from West Africa to the Sudan and Somalia, our missions are carrying out preventive diplomacy every day, helping to sustain complex political, peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes.

However, we still have a long way to go. Violent conflict continues to wreak a shocking toll on individuals, societies and economies. Every day, we can see the costs of the failure to prevent. Despite recent advances, preventive diplomacy continues to face long odds and numerous challenges. A critical factor is political will. If the parties do not want peace or are unwilling to compromise, it is extraordinarily difficult to persuade them or impose it from the outside.

For this and other familiar reasons, we are still too often unable to act until a situation visibly deteriorates. But this should not deter us from trying to resolve underlying tensions and, when conflict does erupt, to stop its spread and mitigate the damage it can cause.

My report (S/2011/552) outlines several areas of focus. First, we must prioritize early action. Too often, we find ourselves scrambling to manage emergencies that could have been prevented from spiralling out of control in the first place. It is incumbent on all of us — Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations — to act early and decisively. The Security Council can do much to address an emerging threat, whether or not it is on its formal agenda, precisely to avoid it ending up there. I or my representatives come before this Council virtually every day to talk about conflicts we are trying to resolve.

Secondly, we must continue to invest in and better equip the women and men who lead our preventive diplomacy efforts on the ground.

Thirdly, while prevention is infinitely cheaper than cure and is one of the smartest, most cost-effective investments we can make, it still needs adequate investment if it is to deliver results. At the same time, we will continue to maximize the impact of the resources we already have.

Fourthly, we must further strengthen our strategic partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. In crisis situations, we must be able to

decide quickly on who can do what to help. Sometimes, preventive diplomacy is getting the international community to speak with one voice. The Security Council has a key role to play in that regard.

Finally, we must continue to support national institutions and mechanisms for mediation and dialogue. Including civil society organizations, especially women and youth who can lead the charge for peaceful change, in preventive efforts is critical.

Preventive diplomacy may not be effective in all situations. Uncertainty, risks and evolving challenges come with the terrain. Yet I firmly believe that better preventive diplomacy is not an option; it is a necessity. Prevention will remain a fundamental priority in my second term as Secretary-General. I count on the support of Member States, regional organizations, civil society and other partners. I know that this is what they expect of me, and it is what people everywhere expect of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President of the Republic of Colombia, to take the floor.

President Santos Calderón (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on having assumed the presidency of the Security Council and convened this high-level meeting, which highlights the commitment of your Government to the high aims of international peace and welfare. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his valuable report (S/2011/552) and for his briefing today, both of which enlighten us about the actions and accomplishments of the United Nations in the field of preventive diplomacy.

Colombia is pleased and grateful for the Security Council's decision to consider as a main topic of debate that of conflict prevention through the peaceful settlement of disputes, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Our task today is to ensure that the means for the prevention and settlement of disputes become ever more agile and efficient. We should not underestimate any of these means; each has virtues of its own and they all have the same purpose.

I would like to stress, however, that some are especially useful, in particular the less formal means for dispute settlement, such as good offices and

mediation. The intrinsic advantages of mediation are evident if one looks at international practice. The mediator must enjoy the parties' trust. Without trust, there is no point in even setting the process in motion. This is why the existence of conditions conducive to reaching agreement is essential if mediation is to proceed smoothly.

A recent experience in our region was the successful mediation carried out by Colombia and Venezuela in order to assure the return of Honduras to the Organization of American States and to contribute to resolving the crisis that arose in that nation in 2009.

Today more than ever before, the recognized leadership of institutions, Governments and high-profile personalities, both in the world arena and in the regional sphere, has a role to play in contributing to the attainment of peace through good offices and mediation. By the same token, international organizations should encourage and promote these processes. We are referring, of course, to mediation processes between States in which the United Nations carries out its mandate, and not to situations involving illegal actors who act outside the system and even against it. We are talking about mediation that works, that sets goals and time limits, and is useful in ending conflicts, not in perpetuating them.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment in his 2009 report (S/2009/189) that is surprising that although mediation has demonstrated its effectiveness as a means for the settlement of disputes, it has attracted little attention and has not drawn many resources from the United Nations system. That is why we were pleased with the recent adoption of a General Assembly resolution (resolution 65/283) that strengthens the role of mediation in conflict prevention and resolution. That document is destined to become the roadmap of mediation.

In international disputes, just as with one's health, it is always better to prevent than to correct. The most propitious moment to resolve a dispute is when it is just emerging, before it starts escalating. For this reason, the early intervention by the United Nations or regional organizations and even the good offices of certain countries in regional settings are fundamental for the prevention and settlement of conflicts.

I also want to stress the important role that regional organizations and arrangements can play in

this context, as recognized in Chapter VIII of the Charter. This has been acknowledged by the Security Council on numerous occasions, most recently in today's meeting.

When the Security Council acts under Chapter VII, the dispute has already acquired such proportions that it is more complex and more difficult to solve, so much so that the Council is empowered to impose sanctions and even to authorize the use of force. It would be ideal not to have to resort to Chapter VII, and therefore we must make every effort to strengthen preventive diplomacy and make it more efficient and more agile.

The Charter provides us with all the proper tools to do that, such as direct negotiations, good offices, mediation, fact-finding, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement, as well as the possibility to call upon the parties to settle their disputes by pacific means and to suggest and recommend procedures for adjustment. We only have to decide to use these mechanisms and this power.

I want to conclude my intervention by making a call to the Council that we assume our responsibilities with a long-term vision. Let us take off the shelf these instruments for prevention and settlement of disputes provided for in Chapter VI of the Charter and put them into practice.

More prevention and less intervention: this must be our common goal, and this is the proposal and invitation that Colombia is making.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa, to take the floor.

President Zuma: We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely debate, which allows us to further explore ways to strengthen and consolidate preventive diplomacy. We also thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for the report (S/2011/552) on which it was based.

In our view, the theme of this year's Security Council summit complements the theme of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, which is "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means". It proves that the United Nations in its entirety is focused on the primary objectives and principles of the Charter. Preventive diplomacy is anchored in the Charter of the United Nations. Article

33 specifically provides for the pacific settlement of disputes.

In 2005, during the world summit, world leaders reaffirmed this principle in the Millennium Declaration by stating: "We are determined to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter" (General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 5).

Today we gather once again in this Council to recommit ourselves to the noble objective of international peace and its achievement through preventive diplomacy. In fact, the necessity for preventive diplomacy has been reaffirmed by this Council many times before. Last July, under the presidency of Nigeria, the Council acknowledged the importance of a peaceful settlement of disputes. In September last year, under the Turkish presidency, the Council at summit level stressed that "the comprehensive and coherent use of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding tools is important in creating the conditions for sustainable peace" (see S/PRST/2010/18).

It is a fact that preventive diplomacy initiatives are more cost-effective than the deployment of peacekeepers once a conflict has broken out. Thus preventive diplomacy is an effective tool at our disposal. To succeed, it requires a sustained injection of resources. This will enable the United Nations to plan and deploy in a timely manner appropriate human and financial resources in potential conflict situations.

We welcome the progress that has already been made by the United Nations through a plethora of initiatives. These include the Secretary-General's good offices, special envoys, the establishment of an early warning system, the deployment of special political missions and of the Mediation Support Unit, the deployment of country teams and regional offices, as well as other diplomatic initiatives aimed at preventing conflicts.

While these fulfil a central role in conflict prevention, it is our opinion that a great deal can still be done, especially through utilizing the unique capacities and experiences that regional organizations provide. The Security Council has often stressed the importance of partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, we appreciate the efforts undertaken by such

regional organizations as the Organization of American States, the Union of South American Nations and the African Union (AU), to name but a few.

With regard to the African Union specifically, it is important to note that since its inception, in 2002, it has established and consolidated a comprehensive Peace and Security Architecture. The Architecture is based on a paradigm that recognizes preventive diplomacy, post-conflict reconstruction and development as central to eradicating conflicts on our continent. These mechanisms that the African Union has put in place bear witness to the commitment of our continent in addressing peace and security challenges in a comprehensive manner.

The African Union has also made great strides in developing its early-warning systems that help the organization to determine which countries are likely to lapse or relapse into conflict. These mechanisms afford the organization the opportunity to avert an imminent conflict. However, for these systems to be effective, early warning should be followed by early action.

In our subregion, the Southern African Development Community continues to play a critical role in ensuring subregional peace and stability. In that context, its Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has undertaken numerous preventive efforts in quelling potential conflicts. It has also spent a great deal of energy and resources in resolving conflicts through dialogue and mediation, such as in Madagascar.

Moreover, it is essential that the efforts of both the African Union and the numerous subregional organizations across the continent working on preventive diplomacy be respected and supported by the United Nations and the international community as a whole. In fact, the Security Council has adopted several decisions in which it expresses its intention to build a strong partnership with the African Union in that regard.

However, over the past few months, we have seen that partnership falter as the African Union has been undermined in its preventive diplomatic efforts, in cases such as Côte d'Ivoire, the Sudan and Libya. Especially in the case of Libya, the AU initiative to ensure a political rather than military solution to the Libyan crisis was deliberately undermined in spite of the decision set forth in resolution 1973 (2011) to support the African Union road map. Such blatant acts of disregard for regional initiatives have the potential

to undermine the confidence that regional organizations have in the United Nations as an impartial and widely respected mediator in conflicts.

Although conflict prevention remains the primary responsibility of Member States, civil society also has a role to play. In addition, it remains imperative that the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provides support to local or national conflict prevention mechanisms. These efforts can be executed without negating the important principles of the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Most important, we must bear in mind the link between development and security. Prevention will be optimized if the root causes of conflicts are addressed effectively. As the 2011 *World Development Report*, on conflict, security and development, reminds us, the root causes of conflict in the majority of instances are related to a lack of resources or unequal development or distribution of often scarce resources.

For the international community to address those causes effectively, strengthened and enhanced cooperation and information-sharing between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, are required. Furthermore, there is an essential need for greater coherence, coordination and interaction between the various United Nations organs and other international organizations, such as the international financial institutions. Furthermore, Member States should share their experiences in building the United Nations capacity in preventive diplomacy.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution in conflict prevention diplomacy. We should be open to consider important elements that can contribute to the prevention of conflicts, including cultural orientation, local preferences and local expertise in developing strategies aimed at preventive diplomacy.

In that regard, the full and effective participation of women at all levels and stages of the prevention of conflict, as well as in all aspects of the peaceful settlement and resolution of disputes, is critical. We therefore reiterate our appreciation for the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, as an institution that acknowledges the need to enhance the role of women in all aspects of life and in society, including preventive diplomacy.

In conclusion, South Africa supports the draft presidential statement before us, as we believe that it makes a significant contribution to our preventive diplomacy efforts and to the execution of the Council's mandate to uphold and preserve international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to take the floor.

President Jonathan: On behalf of the Government and the people of Nigeria, I wish to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this crucial meeting to review the United Nations efforts in the area of conflict prevention. Nigeria considers it a subject of critical importance to all humanity. I want also to commend the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in this regard and for the incisive and comprehensive report (S/2011/552), which has been invaluable in presenting a persuasive case in all ramifications for preventive diplomacy.

When Nigeria convened the open debate on preventive diplomacy in July 2010 (6360th meeting), we were motivated by a profound concern that the nature of conflict was outpacing our collective ability to respond effectively to it. For so long, the international community has accorded little attention to mediation and preventive diplomacy. We have placed far too much emphasis on and devoted too many resources to the military dimensions of peace and security without addressing the root causes of conflicts.

The report before us today indicates that this trend was not strictly a result of failure to utilize preventive strategies, but was principally due to inadequate resourcing and coordination. The immediate challenge before us must be how to address these key questions.

Africa has, over the years, placed a great deal of political weight on the application of preventive diplomacy strategies by putting in place early warning and mediation mechanisms. The African Union took bold steps to develop a framework for preventive diplomacy through the efforts of the African Union Peace and Security Council.

At the subregional level, the Economic Community of West African States has also made great strides in this area, primarily through the steady

implementation of its conflict prevention framework encompassing diplomacy, fact-finding and early warning systems. It is imperative, therefore, that these efforts at regional and subregional levels be supported both financially and technically by the international community and the United Nations system.

Today, a number of effective contact points have been developed within the United Nations system for these collaborative arrangements, especially through the Secretary-General's special envoys, the Department of Political Affairs, United Nations regional offices and the Peacebuilding Commission. As the Secretary-General aptly observed, working with relevant partners has created enabling environments in easing tensions, building capacities for skilled interventions and fostering dialogue.

Indeed, Nigeria has invested resources to support the campaign for preventive diplomacy, especially within our subregion. We have adopted the use of preventive diplomacy in addressing complex questions arising from armed conflicts.

It is therefore encouraging to note that the Secretary-General has established a steering committee to consider measures for enhancing cooperation across the network of preventive diplomacy actors. In real terms, preventive diplomacy is often most effective when conducted behind the scenes, certainly well before tensions rise to boiling point level. We believe we can foster the growth of conflict prevention at both normative and practical levels. We can standardize our approach to political and peacekeeping missions to reflect the strategic importance of preventive diplomacy.

If indeed our primary responsibility in this Council is to maintain international peace and security, the work of the Council in managing international peace and security should be viewed through the lens of preventive diplomacy. If we are able to assist nations and communities in restoring their social and institutional fabric, if we can also apply ourselves to the ongoing task of providing opportunities for people and their livelihood, we can go a long way in reducing opportunities for conflict. We can directly and indirectly prevent conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, to take the floor.

President Ondimba (*spoke in French*): In a world that remains prey to conflict, preventive diplomacy is a crucial issue that inspires hope and that my country considers highly important. I therefore wish, Mr. President, to commend the positive initiative taken by your country, Lebanon, in organizing this debate. I welcome the participation of a number of eminent persons in the debate. I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his report (S/2011/552) and his informative contribution.

In the past two decades, the world has seen a resurgence of armed conflict, which we thought had disappeared at the end of the cold war. Those conflicts, largely intra-ethnic and sometimes both ethnic and religious in origin, caused thousands of deaths and internally displaced persons. They also caused significant material damage to the economic fabric and jeopardized hope for development.

Faced with that situation, the United Nations has, since publication in 1992 of the Agenda for Peace by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, very specifically defined its role and responsibilities in the settlement of conflict situations. That role involves both peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy.

At the 2005 world summit, we solemnly renewed our commitment to promote a culture of preventing armed conflict, on order to effectively take on the interdependent challenges of security and development. For that, we deemed it necessary to strengthen United Nations capacities in the prevention of armed conflict.

For its part, the Security Council, under the terms of resolution 1625 (2005), emphasized the need to adopt a comprehensive strategy on prevention of armed conflict that would take into account their root causes. From that perspective, we had to strengthen and develop strategic partnerships, to ensure the development of prevention mechanisms and allocation of resources to preventive diplomacy. However, we must do even more.

Our collective security requires a greater mobilization of our common efforts. In that regard it is more necessary than ever to bolster already existing partnerships in the area of conflict prevention. It seems encouraging to us that the United Nations has considered this imperative in recent decades. Here we welcome the increasingly frequent dispatch of mediators, emissaries and joint United Nations-African

Union peace missions, as was the case for the Sudan. That type of partnership, as called for under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, merits further development. In fact, a good understanding of conditions on the ground where regional arrangements operate is an indispensable asset for the success of actions conducted in the framework of preventive diplomacy.

We also believe that the United Nations and regional organizations could widely exploit traditional mechanisms for conflict prevention. We would also benefit from greater involvement of civil society and especially women's organizations in the prevention and resolution of disputes.

With respect to support for regional preventative mechanisms, we urge that the United Nations, particularly through its Office to the African Union, contribute to strengthening the African architecture for the maintenance of peace, where preventative mechanisms should have pride of place. In that regard, regional organizations should be assisted in building up their early-warning systems. Such systems are important tools for conflict prevention, if only because early detection means prompt action, as was the case in the crises in Kenya and Madagascar.

To a large extent, the success of conflict prevention will also depend on making use of all the advantages that it offers and taking into consideration the specificities of each conflict situation. We remain convinced that investing in conflict prevention — such as mediation, analysis and assessment of conflict risk — will make a significant contribution to preventing disputes from becoming armed confrontations. The work of the Peacebuilding Commission in countries emerging from conflict also plays a role.

In Central Africa we have put in place not only channels of cooperation through confidence-building measures, but also a subregional mechanism for the detection of preliminary signs of conflict, which we call the Central African Early Warning Mechanism, the headquarters of which is in my country. We will ensure that that tool establishes a true partnership with the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, mostly by supporting capacity-building in conflict prevention for countries of the subregion.

The performance of our systems of preventive diplomacy must be based on enhanced human

resources. Preventive diplomacy initiatives must also enjoy predictable financing if we are to maximize our chances for success. Such initiatives represent a possible future solution that is more certain and less costly than peacekeeping operations of the past.

We welcome the fact that economic and financial institutions are now grasping the connection between peace and development. It is important to strengthen partnerships with those institutions, so that they participate in a more significant way in diplomatic efforts in conflict prevention. The publication of a document by the World Bank on this issue is eloquent proof of the interest our development partners take in questions of peace and security.

To produce the desired results, our efforts at preventive diplomacy will require of the parties to a dispute a manifest will and a genuine commitment to a political solution to the dispute. International judicial arbitration is also a possibility, if the parties are willing to submit to it and to abide by its rulings, as was the case with Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bakassi case.

In conclusion, in spite of all the options we could contemplate to detect potential conflicts, any success risks being limited if particular focus is not put on the need to attack the underlying causes of conflict. Governments must, in developing their own national preventive mechanisms, have the courage to maintain an ongoing dialogue with all national stakeholders and to respect the rules of good governance. The peace, cohesion and stability of States also depend on that dialogue and respect.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Pedro Passos Coelho, Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal, to take the floor.

Mr. Coelho (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, President Sleiman, for the conduct of the Lebanese presidency of the Security Council and especially for the organization of this debate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his excellent report (S/2011/552), which provides us with concrete avenues of action through which to make the preventive work of the Security Council more efficient.

We are considering a very timely theme today. A broad consensus exists as to the merits and utility of a culture of prevention that allows us to identify crises

before they transform into conflicts, with all the human and material costs that such conflicts always levy. It is therefore time to transform that consensus into concrete actions that ensure, moving forward, that the Security Council uses the preventive instruments at its disposal in a better, more systematic manner.

The international community faces new obstacles to peaceful coexistence among peoples that challenge the stability of whole regions. As Portugal recognizes the central role played by the Security Council in this area, we inscribed on the agenda of our presidency of the Council, this November, a meeting on new challenges to international peace and security. We intend to promote an integrated vision that mirrors the many challenges we face in the twenty-first century.

Today, no one questions the interlinkages among those challenges. Security is now also related to sustainable development, climate, energy, epidemics, food security and access to water and basic commodities. Indeed, what we used to characterize as the roots of a conflict are very much at the surface today, with a more direct and proportional impact on our security and well-being. It is also important to mention positive experiences in the field of shared natural resources. Portugal has such a positive experience in what regards the management of shared water resources with our neighbour, Spain.

The United Nations represents a forum of excellence for the debate on the broader concept of security. We therefore see our discussions here today as a value-added contribution to our meeting in November. Preventive diplomacy is a central principle of Portugal's foreign policy. We have actively supported Security Council initiatives that seek to promote a better understanding of the causes of conflict and that seek to discuss options to overcome those obstacles, as was the case, for example, in the tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We have sought for those initiatives also to reflect the priority that we accord to the promotion and protection of human rights, humanitarian issues and the protection of civilians. Moreover, we want to do so while also promoting a closer collaboration with non-governmental organizations and a better coordination of efforts among the United Nations missions, the European Union and the African Union. It is that integrated vision of security — based on complementarity, synergy and cooperation — that

should be encouraged, so as to strengthen the cohesiveness of the international system.

We greatly appreciate, Mr. President, the most useful concept paper presented by your delegation (S/2011/570, annex), in which the key issues of the debate are encapsulated, including the importance of identifying the factors leading to tension, be they political, cultural, socio-economic or environmental in nature.

The United Nations has at its disposal the means to promote timely detection and early warning of conflicts, thereby avoiding the unnecessary degeneration of tensions into open conflict. I think it is necessary to refine the relationship between the most relevant organs and organizations, thereby promoting a culture of prevention that allows for the maintenance and consolidation of peace in an integrated — rather than sequential — manner.

Preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are a complementary triumvirate that together guarantee the emergence of sustainable peace. It is not enough to make peace; it is also necessary to help it take root and grow. That is certainly a most difficult task, especially as it is intimately linked to the rule of law and socio-economic development. Security and development are, however, two sides of the same coin.

I would like, in this context, to highlight the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, in whose founding Portugal was proud to participate. During the 2010 review process of the Peacebuilding Commission, its preventive role was clearly underlined. The Peacebuilding Commission has played a central role in linking peace and security with economic and social development and with humanitarian efforts. The country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission for West Africa, of which Portugal is a part, are concrete examples of that function in action.

We believe that peacekeeping operations can and should assume functions of early peacebuilding, in the areas of security-sector reform, justice and the correctional system, as well as in processes of disarmament, demining and reintegration. Those fundamental actions complement and reinforce the socio-economic reconstruction undertaken by other actors. I think that the positive experiences in the Balkans and in Timor-Leste are clear in this respect.

inspiring also possible solutions that are appropriate for Libya.

For these reasons, Portugal has sought to maintain an active participation in peacekeeping operations, a principle that we will continue to honour to the greatest extent possible.

I have highlighted the importance of an integrated vision of security, in an international framework of complementarity, cooperation and synergy. It is essential that the links between the United Nations and other regional and international organizations be strengthened, consolidating or even institutionalizing the lines of dialogue and communication. The actions of one or another are always strengthened when influential actors collaborate. Knowledge of the situation and the actors on the ground is irreplaceable, and for that reason Portugal has continuously defended the participation of regional organizations such as the African Union or the Arab League as part of a more robust preventive diplomacy.

Allow me also to highlight here the efforts that we have made in the context of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries to strengthen the preventive element and support those of us that are in situations of fragility.

The European Union, naturally, also has a role to play in this context. The panoply of instruments that the Union has at its disposal can and should be used to complement the actions of the United Nations, thereby mutually supporting their respective efforts for preventive diplomacy.

The work of regional and international organizations in conflict prevention cannot in any way be seen as a substitute for the principle of national ownership. National capabilities and capacities and the support given to their consolidation must serve as the foundation for preventive diplomacy, thereby catalysing national strategies for the promotion of peace.

Ultimately, the responsibility to prevent conflict must lie with national institutions; otherwise, there is a risk that the solutions that are found may not be consistent or sustainable in the long run. Conflict prevention should also be based on an inclusive approach in which new civil society actors must also participate. It is important to catalyse partnerships between all relevant actors: civil society, parliaments,

academic institutions and women's and youth organizations, as well as the labour and business community.

Their presence on the ground and their very nature and objectives make them particularly useful and appropriate agents to warn of possible nascent conflicts and to help find mutually acceptable solutions. Their involvement is the best guarantee of the success of preventive diplomacy, and this, in our opinion, is the concept of security that should prevail in this era of globalization and interdependence.

Today we have a much clearer perception of the challenges facing international peace and security than we did a decade ago. We also have a better understanding of the instruments necessary to meet these challenges.

The Arab world is undergoing an unprecedented transformation that will have many geopolitical consequences that are not yet fully understood or defined but that certainly transcend the regional dimension. The response of the international community to that transformation is, and will continue to be, crucial to ensure the success of political transitions as well as international peace, stability and security.

I am particularly heartened to highlight democratic and inclusive pluralism, efforts to strengthen civil society, the opening of society and the economy, respect for the rule of law and human rights as essential elements of this transformation.

Preventive diplomacy is certainly part of this process, and its relevance is indisputable. For that reason, it gives me great pride to participate in a debate where we celebrate this fact.

Allow me to conclude by renewing and strengthening Portugal's commitment to the promotion of peace and security and to continuing to strengthen preventive diplomacy.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite Mr. William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, to take the floor.

Mr. Hague (United Kingdom): The resolve and effectiveness of the United Nations is tested whenever lives are threatened. When conflict looms, the world looks to the United Nations for a decisive response to

prevent violence through agile and creative diplomacy, to stop aggression, to end conflict when it does happen and then to help keep the peace, and be prepared to stay the course so that fragile countries do not lapse back into war.

I think we have shown this year that the United Nations can take a lead in saving life and protecting civilians. In Libya, we mustered legitimate diplomatic, economic and military pressure to prevent a regime from waging war against its people and to deter its members from committing crimes. Our swift action prevented a humanitarian catastrophe, saving the lives of thousands of civilians. It led many to abandon the Al-Qadhafi regime, so hastening its demise, and it allowed the Libyan people to seize the opportunity to determine their future.

In Côte d'Ivoire, acting with the unanimous support of the Security Council, United Nations peacekeepers undertook limited military operations to protect civilians. The United Nations demonstrated zero tolerance for attacks against civilians and United Nations peacekeepers and for the desperate acts of a ruler seeking to cling to power against the wishes of the people.

These experiences hold lessons for us as we seek to improve the role of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, because the first lesson is that the will to act is the vital ingredient in conflict prevention. Without international will and leadership, we risk failing in our duty to uphold international peace and security, giving comfort to the perpetrators of crimes while causing victims to despair.

The increasing frequency of internal conflicts rather than conflicts between States presents different challenges but does not remove our responsibility to protect the civilian population. The impact of conflict is devastating and is not confined within national borders. Lives are lost, people displaced, trade links severed, economies crippled, and crime and terrorism can flourish. The consequences are a burden on us all and a danger to all.

We have a responsibility to use all the means available to the United Nations to prevent conflict and to ensure that it does not escalate. We must encourage sustainable peace through mediation and dialogue, through support to local conflict-prevention efforts, or through more coercive measures, as the situation demands. Military action may be necessary, as has

proved the case in Libya, but it is a last resort and is appropriate only in certain circumstances. Britain is not calling for this, for instance, in the case of Syria.

The second lesson is that actions to prevent conflict must have a strong legal basis and attract regional support, as we did in Libya working with the Arab League and with a clear United Nations resolution. We must also work with the grain of the societies we are dealing with, recognizing that each situation is different and that we cannot impose solutions. Such legitimacy and wide support, themselves the product of diplomacy, must always be our goal, even when in the short term this can make it harder for nations to act.

The third lesson is that we must develop our capacity to anticipate and react to developing conflict, both as individual countries and here at the United Nations. The United Kingdom is now placing great emphasis on effective conflict prevention. This means not waiting for problems to become crises but using our network of embassies as an early-warning system and our role in international organizations to help resolve disputes and create agreements.

We know that development is an indispensable component of conflict prevention, so in Britain we will not retreat an inch from our commitment to spend more of our national income on development. We are enshrining in our law our promise to spend 0.7 per cent of our national income on alleviating poverty elsewhere and ensuring that an increasing proportion of it contributes to conflict prevention. By 2015, 30 per cent of our official development aid will support fragile and conflict-affected areas.

In the United Kingdom, we are also using our new National Security Council to become better at anticipating conflict, and we can share our analysis with others. We also emphasize the need for strategic patience in supporting States that are emerging from conflict. Our experiences from the western Balkans to the Horn of Africa show that a hard-won peace must be preserved and not taken for granted. To cement peace, it often takes generations, and so where we are engaged, we must guard against turning our attention and resources away too soon.

Looking forward, I believe that we must apply these three lessons — political will and leadership, international legitimacy and investment in conflict prevention — to the immediate challenges we face.

Each case will be different, but we need to apply conflict prevention efforts in a way that is flexible and according to our best ability to influence the situation on the ground.

For instance, in Syria the United Kingdom believes that a response from the Security Council is long overdue. The time has come for a resolution demanding an end to violence and real political reform that applies effective pressure on the Syrian authorities to this end. The consequences of inaction would weigh heavily upon us if we were to turn a blind eye to killings, abuses and repression.

In Libya, we must support the National Transitional Council's efforts to rebuild the State and chart a new course for its country. I welcome the Council's decision last week to mandate a United Nations mission for Libya. Attention must now be given to the United Nations role in coordinating international efforts at the request of the Libyan Government and in support of its own plans.

In the Sudan, we must work more effectively to establish a strong position to respond to the worrying levels of violence in Darfur, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile state. And in Yemen, the United Nations should continue to use its good offices to help mediate a peaceful settlement and an end to the appalling violence. In parallel, we must intensify our work to build up the United Nations capacity for preventive diplomacy. This means greater cooperation between United Nations agencies to identify threats and the regular attention of the Security Council on countries at risk.

We support the United Nations increasing use of mediation specialists and special envoys, and we welcome the Secretary-General's call to increase the number of senior female mediators in line with resolution 1325 (2000). Above all, United Nations Member States must be prepared to invest early on in supporting fragile States where requested, as well as to react rapidly when a crisis arises. Such preventive action saves lives, protects fundamental human rights and helps preserve peace. These are indeed our essential tasks.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Alain Juppé, Minister of State for Foreign and European Affairs of the French Republic, to take the floor.

Mr. Juppé (France) (*spoke in French*): Preventive diplomacy — which was a mere concept half a century ago, until formalized by former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his 1992 report *An Agenda for Peace* (S/24111) — has become an essential means of action within the United Nations. The stakes are clearly identified at the very heart of our Charter. The method for preventing the emergence or exacerbation of conflicts has been equally well identified: early warning and speedy action; the need for dialogue, mediation and partnerships; and a long-term vision. Preventive diplomacy also seeks to stabilize social relationships so that peace can be built. This concern, as stipulated in the report of 17 June 1992,

“to ease tensions before they result in conflict — or, if conflict breaks out, to act swiftly to contain it and resolve its underlying causes” (S/24111, para. 23).

Now that our Council faces increasingly complex crises, I believe that it would be useful to ask ourselves what preventive diplomacy can bring to our current actions. I would like to thank the Lebanese presidency for having provided us with this opportunity to share our considerations and views. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his excellent report (S/2011/552).

Our Council holds the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and must therefore be the key actor in the field of preventive diplomacy. This role is translated first and foremost in the deployment of peacekeeping operations, which contribute to preventing the escalation of conflicts. It also requires taking action as early as possible in order to prevent emergent conflicts from deteriorating.

In that regard, I endorse the statement by Mr. Hague to the effect that our Council should adopt as soon as possible a resolution condemning the repression in Syria, which is taking on increasingly intolerable forms as the regime is now attacking children in their schools, according to the very reliable information we receive from our ambassadors.

The concept, means of action and expectations of preventive diplomacy have also broadened in scope. The Council now has new tools at its disposal. It is no longer merely about keeping the peace in conflict areas; it is about intervening before a crisis even breaks out. That is the purpose of the informal procedures for

monitoring high-risk areas — our so-called informal interactive dialogues — which seek to anticipate and, above all, to respond as rapidly as possible. Moreover, the assessments undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs and the information provided by mediators and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General are invaluable, as they shed light on local situations, which are always complex.

Fortunately, the Council is not alone in its involvement. Within the United Nations itself, numerous institutions have actively developed preventive diplomacy tools. I cite two examples. Through its Education for Sustainable Development programme, UNESCO has harnessed education in the service of conflict prevention and the fight against insecurity. The United Nations Development Programme is equally involved in this area, *inter alia*, through its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, which has been implemented in a number of African countries and seeks to reintegrate former combatants into local economies. To that end, it provides specific support to post-conflict countries.

Above and beyond the United Nations, the main regional organizations have also used this instrument. These organizations include the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Union. I have in mind, too, the actions undertaken by the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community in Madagascar.

I also stress the role played by non-governmental organizations. There are too many examples to enumerate here, but each and every one of them, by working to forge more peaceful and harmonious societies, is contributing to conflict prevention.

Preventive diplomacy must also prepare for the challenges of the future. Indeed, we must address the root causes of crises, as a number of speakers have said. It is a question no longer merely of preventing conflict, but of maintaining or even recreating the conditions for peace. That is the preventive strategy that the Secretary-General has called “structural”, consisting of adopting an array of measures — not only political, but also social, cultural, economic and even environmental — that help reduce the factors contributing to conflict.

Thus, in Guinea and Niger, post-transition electoral processes that could have given rise to confrontation were concluded through the joint involvement of the various Special Representatives of the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States. With respect to the crisis in Madagascar, France has supported the efforts of the mediator of the Southern African Development Community.

I should like in particular to emphasize the environmental dimension of crises, which I have no doubt will grow even further in the years to come. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, 40 per cent of the conflicts of the past 60 years are rooted in issues involving natural resources, be it timber, oil, arable land or water.

What will happen tomorrow, when 10 billion people are living on the planet? Let us be frank. The United Nations still lacks tools that could help it prevent incipient catastrophe. In the absence of a strong multilateral entity, future strife over resources or commodities is likely to be resolved bilaterally, to the detriment of the weakest, and on the basis of force.

We must rectify that situation by reforming international environmental governance. The upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development will be a singular opportunity to register progress in this field and to lay the foundation for a global organization for the environment. We must seize that opportunity.

Resolving crises is the duty of our Council, as is preventing them. France believes that preventive diplomacy in all its aspects is a key element of the just and effective governance to which my country aspires with all its heart.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States of America and member of President Obama's Cabinet, to take the floor.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): Thank you, President Sleiman, for Lebanon's leadership in bringing us together today to discuss this very important subject.

The late Dag Hammarskjöld pursued a vision of a United Nations that would move from what he said was a “culture of reaction to a culture of prevention”. That

unfinished task lies before us today. Some 1.5 billion people now live in countries shaken by conflict, and few of those countries will see even one of the Millennium Development Goals met.

The World Bank's annual *World Development Report* puts the cost of the average civil war at some \$65 billion, or just over half of the global aid budget. While recent years have seen an unparalleled drop in global poverty, countries devastated by conflict and violence have been left out of that trend. Poverty is a major driver of conflict. Let me highlight just one statistic. In countries where the average person earns only \$250 per year — the poorest of nations — the scientifically proven risk of civil conflict within a five-year time frame is 15 per cent. By contrast, in countries with a per capita income of \$5,000 per year — middle-income countries — the risk of civil conflict over the same five-year period is less than 1 per cent. Economic growth and development must therefore be viewed as key to our strategies for preventing conflict.

It is especially difficult to prevent violence in societies struggling concurrently with crushing poverty, crumbling institutions, rampant discrimination and deep-seated suspicions among ethnic or religious groups. Any one of those maladies on its own is difficult to address, but the mix is combustible and requires a comprehensive approach.

We say that often, but today the Security Council has given that mantra greater definition. The draft presidential statement we will adopt squarely addresses the links between security and development. Moreover, it provides an outline for a comprehensive approach, including several core elements for long-term conflict prevention, including sustainable development, poverty eradication, national reconciliation, good governance, gender equality, the end of impunity, the rule of law and, I would argue, most notably democracy and respect for human rights. Those are the conditions most often found in peaceful societies. Their absence creates conditions conducive to conflict. We ignore them at our peril.

Yet, as we dedicate ourselves to more comprehensive and long-term conflict prevention, we must be mindful that peace, prosperity and democracy cannot be achieved quickly or endure if imposed from outside. The solutions to the root causes of conflict must be home-grown. The United Nations cannot do

what others must do for themselves, but it can play an indispensable supporting role.

The United Nations has vital conflict prevention work to do on five fronts in particular. The first is early warning, information and analysis. The United Nations system has a significant presence in many countries where the conditions conducive to conflict are rife. The United Nations is thus well-placed to provide early warning of potential concerns and to help us better understand and anticipate what makes each situation unique. Too often, we resort to cookie-cutter solutions, as if each case were the same as the last, because we do not know enough and we are reacting too late. The United Nations knowledge should help us to act earlier and smarter.

But the United Nations itself sometimes struggles to find the best experts, and itself has limits to its knowledge and information-gathering capabilities. The United Nations must therefore work more closely with Governments, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations, academics and other capable actors based on their comparative advantages. To be truly effective, it must be able to draw upon all sources of information.

Secondly, we need vigorous, sustained diplomacy and mediation to prevent violence or its escalation. Intensive diplomatic efforts by the Secretary-General, his senior envoys and key staff in the field can pull adversaries back from the brink, especially when backed by a united international community. The United States continues to strongly support the robust use of the Secretary-General's good offices and special political missions to avert war. We strongly support efforts to build and strengthen the cadre of seasoned envoys. We welcome the United Nations recent efforts to work together with regional envoys and independent mediators when helpful. We urge the United Nations and other international actors to recruit more women as envoys, special representatives and chiefs of field missions.

Thirdly, diplomacy requires leverage, and that means both carrots and sticks. The credible threat of consequences for aggressors and others who refuse to abide by their international commitments should include, when necessary, the imposition of targeted sanctions. Effective mediation does not mean just listening to all sides; it also means acting firmly when needed so as to back diplomatic efforts. Here, the

Security Council has a particular responsibility, including helping to mobilize wider political support for diplomatic efforts and moving swiftly in the face of emergencies.

Fourthly, societies emerging from conflict continue to face the greatest risk of more bloodshed, even with the presence of peacekeepers. Peace operations are on the front lines of United Nations prevention efforts, and they must be thought of accordingly. We should cease to make false distinctions between peacekeeping and prevention. In fact, they are inextricably linked. The investments we make to strengthen the ability of peacekeepers to detect breakdowns in a peace process, to sound the alarm bells in times of crisis and to quickly redeploy forces to dangerous hotspots are indeed investments in conflict prevention.

Fifthly, while the United Nations and other actors can do a great deal through diplomacy and peacekeeping operations, our long-term objective must be to enable countries to prevent conflicts by themselves. The United Nations, together with regional organizations and the wider international community, must help countries to walk the long, difficult road from war to peace. We support making greater use of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in more countries rattled by conflict. The high-level review of international civilian peacebuilding capacities commissioned by the Secretary-General contains many good ideas and we look forward to their prompt implementation.

All these instruments can save lives. They provide hope and, when employed effectively, can make a meaningful difference in the world. But they require us to overcome our differences and unite behind a common resolve in the Chamber. So let us summon the political will to confront the atrocities unfolding before our eyes, from Syria to Southern Kordofan. Let us revitalize our will and ability to prevent conflicts before embers start to blaze.

The President (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. Yang Jiechi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, to take the floor.

Mr. Yang Jiechi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): It gives me great pleasure to attend this high-level meeting of the Security Council on diplomacy. I wish

to thank Lebanon for its initiative and the efforts it has made to make this meeting possible.

Over 60 years ago, world leaders jointly established the United Nations, with a view to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. They made a solemn commitment in the Charter to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. That has given us both theoretical guidance and a basis for action in conducting preventive diplomacy and preventing the outbreak of conflicts. Over the past six decades, the United Nations has actively promoted the concept of preventive diplomacy and put it into practice, making important contributions to defusing tension, resolving hotspot issues and restoring regional peace and stability.

Our world today is undergoing profound and complex changes. The international situation on the whole is stable, yet regional hotspot issues keep emerging, and traditional and non-traditional security threats are intertwined. The new situation requires us to have a keener appreciation of the importance of preventive diplomacy and to employ diverse means to add new impetus to the United Nations efforts in the area of preventive diplomacy so that it can contribute more to maintaining international peace and security. Here, I would like to make a four-point proposal on United Nations preventive diplomacy under the new circumstances.

First, we should pay greater attention to prevention and early warning. The successful experiences of the United Nations in the past have shown that it would be doubly rewarding to forestall the outbreak and spread of conflicts with prompt and appropriate actions at an early stage of a crisis. The United Nations should truly change the mindset of prioritizing treatment over prevention and the practice of prioritizing peacekeeping over mediation. There should be more input into early-warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and peace mediation. This will help save resources, improve efficiency and protect people from the scourge of war. The Secretary-General and regional offices of the United Nations have a bigger role to play in preventive diplomacy.

Secondly, we should adopt an integrated strategy and seek to address the root causes of conflict. Conflicts in today's world differ from each another in nature, and the causes for disputes are increasingly

complicated. The United Nations should formulate a comprehensive, scientific and effective strategy on preventive diplomacy. We may use such measures as good offices, mediation and negotiation to mitigate crises. At the same time, we should increase input into development, particularly development in Africa. Only by helping the countries concerned achieve economic growth, social progress and sustainable development and eliminate the underlying economic and social causes of conflicts can we fundamentally prevent conflicts. The United Nations, and the Peacebuilding Commission in particular, has made some positive efforts in recent years. They should continue to explore new ideas and new practices in this regard.

Thirdly, we should enhance communication and coordination and bring into full play the strengths of all parties. Preventive diplomacy is a multidimensional task and cannot be achieved without the support and coordination of all sides. In recent years, the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa have played an important role in mediating hotspot issues in Africa. Their success shows that regional and subregional organizations have unique political, moral and geographic advantages in preventing and resolving local conflicts. The United Nations, particularly the Security Council, should strengthen cooperation with these organizations and fully realize their initiative in using their unique strengths to actively engage in preventive diplomacy. Other countries that can influence the parties to a conflict should also play their due role.

Fourthly, we should make use of all available resources to build strong synergies. The work of the United Nations covers a wide range of areas, and the entities and agencies within the United Nations system all have their respective and clearly defined mandates. The United Nations as a whole is endowed with rich resources and unique overall strengths. We hope that the United Nations will coordinate its resources and work in various areas, fully utilize the expertise of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other organs, and make good use of the resources of the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme and other specialized agencies, programmes and funds. We hope the United Nations will encourage all sides to enhance exchanges and coordination so as to build synergies and conduct preventive diplomacy more effectively. We support the

Secretary-General in playing a more active role in coordinating the efforts of all agencies.

As early as 2,000 years ago, the Chinese people put forward the concept of guarding against potential dangers and the idea that peace is of supreme value. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China has always advocated peace, development and cooperation in the United Nations and the Security Council and has exerted great efforts for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention. On the basis of our practice over the years, we are more convinced than ever that the peaceful settlement of disputes, as one of the basic principles of the United Nations Charter, remains highly relevant under the new circumstances. It is a principle that should continue to be respected and upheld. Preventive diplomacy deserves more attention and input.

Let us work together to reaffirm the solemn commitments made by the older generation of leaders in the United Nations Charter, enable the United Nations and the Security Council to better meet threats and challenges and strive for a world of common security and enduring peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Mr. S. M. Krishna, Minister for External Affairs of the Republic of India, to take the floor.

Mr. Krishna (India): I would like to begin by congratulating Lebanon on its presidency of the Security Council this month. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, for personally presiding over this very important event. It is indeed an honour to participate in the discussions today and to convey to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Security Council, the good wishes of my Government. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/552) and his recommendations on the use of preventive diplomacy by the United Nations.

If properly used, preventive diplomacy could become an essential element in the global community's response to some of the major challenges facing the international system today, and could help in conflict prevention.

The adoption of the Charter of the United Nations was supposed to herald the beginning of a new chapter in international relations. One of the purposes of the

United Nations, as elaborated in Chapter I, Article I, paragraph 1 of the Charter, was to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace.

The Charter therefore stresses the importance of the adjustment or settlement of disputes by peaceful means, which include negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement and resort to regional agencies or arrangements.

Over the last six decades, peaceful interventions by the United Nations have helped defuse a number of conflict situations on a number of occasions. These interventions, wherever they are undertaken with impartiality, fairness and equity, have earned the United Nations a reputation for effective mediation. The challenge before the international community is to build on this legacy and ensure that peaceful means for the settlement of disputes remain relevant to current realities.

Contemporary threats to international peace and security differ qualitatively from those prevalent six decades ago. Conventional war has been overtaken by intra-State and even borderless violence. Low-intensity conflict, non-State actors and the terrorist-criminal-drug-trafficking nexus threaten international stability and progress. It is recognized that such conflicts are extremely complicated and require complex solutions. Unfortunately, recent developments seem to indicate a worrying trend towards increased reliance on the use of force as a mechanism for resolving some of these conflicts.

The limitations of using force too frequently and too quickly are many. Any respite that coercion brings about in the absence of a political settlement is likely to be only short-lived. Efforts at peaceful settlement of disputes may also suffer if force is used prematurely and without adequate deliberation. Very frequently, a demonstration of a lack of patience in persisting with peaceful efforts is also likely to play into the hands of those who want these conflicts to persist.

The use of force also leads to collateral damage. Such damage, whether human or material, has unpredictable effects on political conflict resolution processes while creating moral or normative dilemmas. In many places, the use of force has prolonged conflicts, a situation where the cure turned out to be

worse than the disease itself. The international community must not show undue eagerness to use coercive arrangements in its hurry to bring peace.

We are often reminded of the shortcomings and limitations of diplomacy and the need to intervene. It is important, however, to remember that the tragic events of the past that are cited to justify intervention took place not because dialogue was ineffective but because of a lack of will on the part of the international community to act. Such failures do not in any way detract from the soundness of the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes or its means as mentioned in the Charter itself.

Of course, it goes without saying that the peaceful method is the more difficult one. The great Indian Emperor Ashoka noted three millennia ago that to do good is difficult. Preventive diplomacy takes time and commitment. It requires a clear understanding of the nature and context of the conflict and the ability to discern realistic solutions. It requires the involvement of the various stakeholders affected by conflict. It needs to incorporate forces for stability and progress into a particular situation.

The foremost responsibility of sovereign States is the protection of their populations. It is also their primary responsibility to prevent conflict. Thus, actions undertaken within the framework of conflict prevention by United Nations entities must be designed to support and complement, as appropriate, the conflict-prevention roles of national Governments.

India has always opposed and will continue to oppose the use of force as a primary reaction to conflict. As the major troop-contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping operations, we are more familiar than most with the limitations of force. We note, however, that peacekeepers, who are also early peacebuilders, are being asked to do more with less. This resource gap must be addressed. The inability of the international community to match its mandates with resources ultimately affects the credibility of the Security Council and its authority in resolving disputes.

There really is no sustainable alternative to political processes and the principle that the primary focus of the United Nations should be facilitating a political settlement. Coercive measures should be avoided and used as a measure of last resort, implemented with extreme care and caution. Decisions

to use force should be free of political motives. The humanitarian imperative of providing succour to the suffering should not be used to further one's political objectives. That does humanitarianism and diplomacy a great disservice. Moreover, there are very good reasons why international law is based on the principle of consent. Efforts to circumvent this process are not prudent and cannot be expected to address the drivers of conflict on an enduring basis.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the time-tested principles of national consent, impartiality, fairness and equity in all conflict-prevention activities that the United Nations may undertake.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now invite His Excellency Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Minister for External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil, to take the floor.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): Let me start by expressing my satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council and by conveying President Dilma Rousseff's regret at being unable to attend today's debate. She asked that I transmit her respectful greetings and congratulations for having chosen this important topic for our high-level meeting.

The subject of this meeting allows us to call attention to the diplomatic instruments available for the promotion of peace in a world where we often witness a tendency to hasten towards coercion, sanctions and military intervention. Today's debate helps us to underline the priority role that the peaceful settlement of disputes must have in achieving the central goal of the United Nations, which is the promotion of international peace on the legal basis provided by the Charter.

Brazil has inscribed the principle of the peaceful resolution of controversies in its Constitution. We believe that peace results from collective efforts in favour of building just societies. We have underscored the interdependence between peace, security and development. We know from experience that stability and security are seldom achieved where there is social exclusion. I was particularly pleased to hear Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's comment yesterday, when he said that "development is ultimately the best prevention" (A/66/PV.11). The promotion of socio-economic development and the creation of political opportunities to allow every country to fulfil its potential are indispensable elements in any agenda for preventive

diplomacy — and, by extension, in any agenda for peace.

In Brazil, we are committed to fighting poverty and improving governance. In our region, the Union of South American Nations is consolidating itself as a zone of peace, cooperation and democracy. We know, however, that irrespective of how developed regional cooperation becomes, we will always need a functional and effective multilateral system. It cannot be repeated too often that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for promoting international peace and security.

It behoves the Security Council to find solutions that can both resolve the challenges posed by specific situations of crisis and, at the same time, strengthen the multilateral system itself. Recent episodes have shown us the limits of military action as a means for promoting stability, as well as the inappropriateness of using force preventively or pre-emptively. Yesterday, we took note of President Obama's statement that "the tide of war is receding" (A/66/PV.11). We might emphatically add that we must usher in a tide of diplomacy, dialogue and prevention.

The prevention of conflict and preventing its escalation can be strengthened through many different tools. Peacekeeping operations are valuable instruments. The Peacebuilding Commission can play an important role in staving off the recurrence of conflict. I agree with the Prime Minister of Portugal when he speaks of the mutually reinforcing triad of prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. But let us not forget that disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction will also greatly enhance our capacity to avoid conflict. While we would not disagree with those who associate poverty with conflict and tension, let us not forget that, historically, it is the very powerful military that have wrought destruction on the widest scale.

As many have pointed out today, in order to fully discharge its role in the field of peace and security, the United Nations must support and promote women's participation in national and international political processes. President Dilma Rousseff stressed our commitment to that goal in her speech to the General Assembly yesterday. Unfortunately, however, women are still underrepresented in the different stages and activities of the diplomatic agenda for peace.

We live in a time marked by mass demonstrations in the Arab world, where a young generation demands effective participation in the political future of their countries and societies. From the beginning, Brazil has not only stood with those who call for freedom of expression and institutional progress, but has also steadfastly promoted peaceful means to address the tensions brought about by those processes. At the same time, we have called for respect for international law and underlined the need to fully respect the decisions of the Security Council, in particular when Chapter VII has been invoked.

Fulfilling our responsibility in the realm of prevention involves favouring mediation, the good offices of the Secretary-General and, at all times, giving priority to the full range of instruments to peacefully resolve differences, including giving due consideration to regional organizations and refraining from loose interpretations of Security Council mandates. I think that the Council needs to take careful note of the statement of President Zuma of South Africa when he mentioned that the African Union was widely sidelined in recent situations that have been brought to the attention of the Council.

The wave of change that has swept the Middle East and Northern Africa lends an even greater sense of urgency to the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a State of their own. Defusing this enormous focus of tension and instability through a two-State solution and through due respect for Israel's right to live in peace and security can indeed, and should, be portrayed as a way of advancing the concept of preventive diplomacy.

The exercise of preventive diplomacy requires that the Council participate effectively in defusing tensions of varying degrees of intensity. In other words, the Council will not be fulfilling its role if it avoids the potentially most destabilizing situations. Let us not forget that resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) were consensus decisions of this body. They remain inescapable references for the future of peace in the Middle East.

Brazil expresses its expectation that the Security Council will show greater leadership in helping to bring about, through dialogue and diplomacy, a just and lasting peace to the Middle East. As President Sarkozy stated yesterday,

(spoke in French)

"we must stop thinking that a single country, even the biggest one, or even a small group of countries, can alone resolve a problem of such complexity. Such an approach sidelines too many major players" (A/66/PV.11).

(spoke in English)

Updating the composition of the Security Council in order to better reflect the realities of the world today will greatly contribute to the strengthening of our preventive capacity. Meanwhile, dialogue, persuasion, diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts will continue to be the guiding principles of my country's conduct in the Council and the Organization, where our collective responsibility will require that additional and more sustained efforts be invested in prevention as a broad approach towards lasting peace.

The President *(spoke in Arabic)*: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Guido Westerwelle, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, to take the floor.

Mr. Westerwelle (Germany): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2011/552) and his instructive briefing today. Let me make three points.

First, it falls squarely within the responsibility of the Security Council to prevent conflicts from occurring wherever possible. In fact, it is one of its central tasks. Conflict prevention is one of the chief obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. It is the most efficient and cost-effective way of promoting international peace and security. Effective conflict prevention can avoid loss of life, population displacements and economic chaos. Working on improving prevention is therefore both a humanitarian and a strategic necessity. Over the years, the Security Council has considerably improved its tools to shoulder that responsibility. Agreeing on the right instrument from the broad spectrum available is a crucial task and challenge for the Council.

At this point, allow me to add some remarks on the current situation in Syria. Every day, peaceful demonstrators are brutally repressed and innocent civilians are killed. This has to stop. The Council should send a strong and urgent message to the leadership in Damascus in order to prevent the continued senseless killing of people.

In our view, early warning is of key importance to prevent escalation. We welcome the fact that the Security Council has been increasingly prepared to tackle new threats and situations of incipient conflict. That is the way forward.

Secondly, in addition to operational improvements, we also need a long-term structural perspective. Part of the Security Council's responsibility for conflict prevention is the need to look at long-term threats to global security. To take one example, it is our conviction that understanding the implications of climate change for international peace and security will be essential to prevent escalation in many future crises.

Aside from facing these new threats, the best prevention of conflicts remains respect for human rights and economic development. There can be true peace, sustainable development and shared prosperity only when human rights are respected. A credible fight against impunity can also have a preventive effect.

Thirdly, the Security Council cannot do this alone. As stated in the Charter, the Security Council shall encourage pacific settlement of disputes also through regional arrangements. There has been a notable growth in mediation efforts by regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union, the League of Arab States and the European Union. Regional expertise needs to be heard when dealing with conflicts in a particular region. Germany has therefore always underscored the central importance of the Arab League's stance on the developments in its region over the last half-year.

The European Union has assumed its regional and global responsibilities. The European Union actively participates in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It has developed its own instruments for enhancing stability and consolidating peace, including crisis-management missions and diplomatic initiatives. It also supports the African Union and the United Nations in their efforts to bring peace. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will be key to further improving capacities and tools to deal with prevention. The civilian capacities review also aims at making better use of existing mediation capacities in Member States.

None of these efforts can replace direct talks among the actors involved. We cannot make peace in

their place, but we can encourage the forces of reason, reconciliation and compromise. Mediation can be a very useful tool in this regard. Establishing a culture of prevention is a question of political will, first and foremost that of parties directly affected. The international community has to lend its support wherever possible. Developing a culture of prevention is also a question of the political participation of those affected, in particular women. Women should be at the core of prevention and sustaining peace.

We fully support the conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2011/552), notably with a view to building integrated partnerships on all levels and improving early warning mechanisms. We also need to adopt a long-term perspective regarding new challenges to peace and security. I conclude by expressing my delegation's support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted today.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I invite His Excellency Mr. Sven Alkalaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to take the floor.

Mr. Alkalaj (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I would like to thank His Excellency President Sleiman of Lebanon, as well as the delegation of Lebanon, for organizing this high-level meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his insightful remarks.

The topic we are discussing today represents one of the most important issues for determining the further course of action of the United Nations pertaining to the prevention of conflict. Today, we are seeing a significant number of crises and new global challenges that have the potential to pull entire regions into violence and consequently become a challenge to international peace and security. In such a fragile security environment, conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as the founding purposes of the United Nations and pillars of its Charter, represent the main tools at our disposal.

The United Nations was founded as an Organization that would act not only to prevent conflicts between nations and avert future wars, but also to strengthen cooperation among its Members. Entrusted with the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council needs to optimize the use of its preventive diplomacy tools.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has shared the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security through its membership in the Security Council. We will stay fully committed to this course. There is no doubt that in recent times, the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, have recognized the crucial importance of preventive diplomacy. The question is: Can we make improvements in this regard? I think that we can and that we should.

I will echo the words that I said exactly two years ago after the election of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Security Council. We believe that, based on the case of my country, Bosnia and Herzegovina is going to be a strong voice for preventive diplomacy and try to follow up early warning signs anywhere in the world with the utmost sensitivity. This approach is more important today than it was two years ago, and today's debate is a clear evidence of that.

Reacting after a crisis has already started is always a less efficient and less cost-effective method for preserving peace and security. However, we have to keep in mind that there is no universal solution that can be applied to all crises; rather, each particular case requires our full attention.

A number of regional and subregional organizations have become more active in their role as partner to the United Nations in the area of preventive diplomacy. This reflects a growing conviction that emerging crises should be addressed in appropriate international forums. The development and improvement of early warning systems, creating mechanisms for rapid response, the establishment of prevention structures and the use of the Secretary-General's special envoys, groups of friends and fact-finding missions all have crucial roles to play in preventive diplomacy capacities. We support the strengthening of the strategic dialogue between United Nations and regional organizations and a more regular exchange of views and information in order to enable the Council to make adequate decisions. Regional organizations are often better informed than their international counterparts for the early detection of crises.

Despite of all the efforts and readiness of the international community to assist in conflict prevention, I wish to underline that the willingness of the stakeholders involved in political processes in the

field to preserve peace remains the most crucial element. The durability of peace agreements can be achieved only by assisting national counterparts in building the foundations for sustainable peace and addressing the root causes of conflict, as well as developing nationally owned institutions that can prevent conflict through dialogue.

Today, I want to reaffirm my country's commitment to strengthening the international capacity for preventive diplomacy in the interest of peace, security and development. Bosnia and Herzegovina stands ready to support those efforts.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I invite the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to take the floor.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Lebanese initiative to convene a Council meeting is dedicated to one of the most important challenges of global politics today. The current state of international relations, as failure to resolve long-standing conflicts and the emergence of hotbeds of instability have aggravated the threat to global security, urgently calls for collectively agreed work in conflict prevention and the pooling of the efforts of all major members of the international community.

To avoid further shocks, international efforts must refocus from reacting to outbreaks of conflicts throughout the world to developing a comprehensive strategy to prevent the initial causes of conflict, ensuring long-term political stability and socio-economic development, to which I would add the challenges of counteracting global and cross-border threats and challenges, above all international terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, organized crime and the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

In the past few years, the United Nations, through its Security Council and the Secretary-General, together with many regional and subregional organizations, has done significant work in identifying the reasons for and helping to prevent conflicts. Yet fast, radical solutions to large-scale problems in this area do not exist. The successful containment of conflicts depends on a systemic application of early warning instruments, using the capabilities of preventive diplomacy, mediation and good offices missions. Strengthening the capabilities of the United Nations is one of the most important thrusts in the

reform of the Organization, and priority attention should be paid to it.

To ensure the success of our work in this very important area, we need to observe a number of conditions. First of all, there is no room for double standards dictated by short-term political circumstances or the preferences of particular States. Why are efforts undertaken with regard to some countries to establish a political process and a national dialogue — for example, in Yemen — while sanctions are imposed on the incumbent Governments of other States whose opposition is primed for confrontation?

Secondly, bearing in mind that the majority of conflicts are intra-State, it is very important to understand that interference in domestic political processes, regardless of the position of the receiving parties, hardly answers the interests of long-term stabilization. The experience of Iraq and Libya are eloquent testimonies to the fact that, in the end, only the people themselves can determine the fate of their countries, and external armed intervention in internal conflicts creates the risk of a spiralling confrontation in those parts of the world.

Regarding the Middle and Near East, we can affirm that such a scenario will, *inter alia*, reduce the prospects for a settlement of the Palestinian problem. If that is not solved, it will be a strong source of fuel for extremist propensities in the region.

Today's conflicts cannot be resolved by force. There can be no ambiguity about that. Success in resolving crisis situations resides in a painstaking collective search for political and diplomatic solutions, and a thorough and inclusive dialogue to address long-standing problems and ensure stable political development in those countries.

Developments in the world show the growing role of mediators in preventing and settling conflicts. Their work requires great skill and, most importantly, patience. We continue to see the need for good offices missions of the Secretary-General and his special envoys. We have all borne witness to the important mediation efforts of the Quartet to find ways to resolve the Middle East situation; the United Nations in the negotiating process between the Cypriot communities; the High-level African Union panel in the Sudan; Qatar in the Darfur settlement process; and Egypt and other States in the area of intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

The responsiveness and effectiveness of the United Nations anti-crisis machinery reside in its peacekeeping missions. We do not support increasingly popular assignment to peacekeeping missions of protection of civilians and delivery of humanitarian assistance tasks. As important as those roles are, we must not forget the fundamental functions of peacekeepers as facilitators of political process and the maintenance of peace and security in their areas of deployment.

We are prepared to continue to support peacekeeping operations. We believe it necessary to pay particular attention to increasing the military expertise of the Security Council and stepping up the work of the Military Staff Committee in conducting, in particular, systemic analyses of the military and political situations in problem areas of the world.

Important challenges in helping post-conflict countries are handled by the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, whose coordinating and mobilizing we fully support. We believe that the efforts being made to improve the United Nations civilian capability and the deployment of civilian contingents in post-conflict regions are steps in the right direction.

A significant role belongs to the Secretariat, which must be responsible for monitoring and analysing situations in different regions, forecasting the development of crises, planning and expeditiously informing the Security Council about potential outbreaks of conflict.

The crises of the past year have helped open up the potential of regional organizations in the prevention and political settlement of conflicts. The African Union has shown its mediation capabilities in the Sudan, Burundi and Madagascar and was ready to do more in Libya. In line with this African example, we see good possibilities for partnerships between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which are increasing their political authority and contribution and strengthening regional and international security.

We believe it extremely important that, as we continue to actively rely on Chapter VIII of the Charter, making use of the possibility of strong regional organizations capable of assuming more responsibility for situations in their regions will allow the United Nations to be more focused on addressing

global questions in the interests of the entire international community.

We support the practice of establishing United Nations regional centres for preventive diplomacy as effective instruments for identifying and preventing conflicts, as well as in developing regional interaction. We appreciate the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia and its Head, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, based on the principles of neutrality, objectivity and cooperation with the Governments of the States of Central Asia and aimed at interacting with regional integration organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Community, CSTO and SCO.

We share the opinion of the Secretary-General about the importance of interaction with representatives of civil society, parliaments, business groups and academics so as to keep a hand on the pulse of, and to monitor on a regular basis, the development of potential conflict situations.

It is an acknowledged fact that conflict prevention in all respects is much less costly than subsequent settlement efforts. The material and

intellectual investment of the international community in early warning and in strengthening the United Nations potential for peace mediation, political analysis and assessment of conflict situations will be money well spent.

The Russian Federation supports the Lebanese delegation's draft presidential statement.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Council has before it the text of a draft presidential statement on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2011/18.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council has thus concluded its deliberations.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6622nd meeting

Monday, 26 September 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Ms. Ziade	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalčić
	Brazil	Mrs. Dunlop
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. MOUNGARA MOUSSOTSI
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Kumar
	Nigeria	Mrs. OGWU
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Laher
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Libya

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Under rule 37 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Mahmoud Jibril, Chairman of the National Transitional Council Executive Office of Libya, and request the Protocol Officer to escort him to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Jibril, Chairman of the Executive Office of the National Transitional Council of Libya, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal, in his capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011).

I now give the floor to Mr. Pascoe.

Mr. Pascoe: I appreciate the opportunity to once again brief the Council on the situation in Libya.

I will focus on what the United Nations has been doing since the adoption of resolution 2009 (2011) on 16 September and a brief update on the current situation. I must say that I am also delighted to see Mr. Mahmoud Jibril, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Transitional Council (NTC), here with us today.

As Council members are aware, the Secretary-General convened a high-level meeting on Libya in New York on 20 September on the margins of General

Assembly, at which participants officially welcomed the National Transitional Council of Libya as the legitimate delegation representing the Libyan people at the United Nations. Participants also expressed full support to the interim authorities in Libya, led by NTC President Mr. Mustafa Abdel Jalil.

At that meeting, President Jalil pledged to uphold the principles of human rights and establish a society based on tolerance and co-existence. The NTC has repeatedly and publicly embraced essential principles of tolerance, moderation, reconciliation, human rights, and the rule of law, and in particular the rights of women and migrant workers. Mr. Jalil thanked the international community for its support and outlined the United Nations support for the early establishment of the State and resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011). He also highlighted the main challenges ahead, such as removing any pockets of resistance, addressing reconstruction needs and compensating families of those killed, injured or maimed.

Special Representative Martin returned last week to Tripoli, where the presence of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya is being established. I can report that the capital city displays remarkable normality, with its infrastructure overwhelmingly intact and public servants back in their offices, even while Government appointments are awaited, banks and shops open, businesses re-establish themselves, most children are back in school, and traffic is once again quite heavy.

However, fighting continues in Sirte, Bani Walid and a few other pockets of resistance in the country, with NATO continuing its military operations in Sirte over the weekend. Some civilians have fled the areas of fighting. The humanitarian country team is working with the Libyan authorities to enhance support in conflict areas. An assessment of the needs in the area around Bani Walid is to take place tomorrow, with follow-up missions to Sabha and Sirte in the coming days. The leadership of the NTC continues its efforts to restore security and peace in other areas, but recent reports have shown that the security situation in some parts of the country remains fragile, as demonstrated by the attack by pro-Al-Qadhafi forces on the town of Ghadamis near the Algerian border.

The challenges faced by the NTC are many. I would like to mention four here today.

First, it is essential that steps to address national reconciliation and unity and to ensure that all military groups are brought under a unified command and the political authority of the NTC be carried out quickly. The formation of a new inclusive interim Government that reflects the full diversity of Libyan society will be a crucial step in this direction. We hope that, despite the difficulties, the new Libyan Government will soon be announced and, with the support of the new United Nations Support Mission in Libya and other partners, will begin working on these critical issues.

Secondly, it is imperative that the NTC and the international community establish control over the large stocks of sophisticated arms, including ground-to-air missiles, amassed by the Al-Qadhafi Government. The spread of these weapons and the danger that they could fall into the hands of terrorists are matters of grave concern.

Re-establishing control over chemical weapons material is of paramount importance. In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 5 September, the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, reported that it had become apparent during a recent meeting of the OPCW Executive Council that the risk to the safety of the category-1 chemical weapon stockpiles had increased as a result of the rapidly changing situation in the country. As members will recall, in December 2009 the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction granted Libya an extension of its deadline to complete destruction of remaining category-1 chemical weapons to 15 May 2011. However, inspectors from the OPCW who had been on site to monitor destruction activities departed Libya on 8 February 2011 and destruction activities were halted.

On 22 September, news reports stated that forces associated with the (NTC) had discovered a depot of chemical weapons materials located in the area of Al-Jufrah, approximately 435 miles south of Tripoli, that had been previously undeclared. OPCW is working on confirming this information.

It remains important for the NTC to take necessary steps to ensure the safety of all remaining chemical weapon stockpiles in Libya and, as the situation in the country allows, resume destruction

activities in cooperation with the OPCW and other agencies. The NTC may now wish to invite inspectors back to the sites.

Thirdly, reports of the uncovering of a mass grave near the infamous Abu Salim prison in Tripoli, with some 1,270 remains reportedly of prisoners killed in June 1996, indicate further the enormity of the human rights crimes perpetrated by the former regime against its own people. It is essential that the Libyan authorities secure this and other grave sites so that the fate of disappeared persons may be clarified as forensic expertise is available and evidence is preserved for future accountability mechanisms. At the same time, every effort must be made to prevent reprisal attacks on members or supporters of the former regime. All countries must cooperate with the International Criminal Court to ensure that those indicted are apprehended if they leave or have left Libya.

Fourthly, the Secretary-General has repeatedly expressed his concern over the welfare of African migrants and third-country nationals. The United Nations continues to facilitate the evacuation of people — over 200,000 since the beginning of the crisis — while many more who require assistance remain in the country and in transit camps. We also urge the early processing of those in detention and the security of those who continue to work in Libya.

Let me briefly turn to the status of our deployment to Libya.

Following the unanimous adoption of resolution 2009 (2011) of 16 September, which mandated the establishment of UNSMIL, the Secretary-General announced on 19 September the appointment of Mr. Ian Martin as his Special Representative and Mr. Georg Charpentier as Deputy Special Representative. Mr. Charpentier has also been designated as Resident Coordinator ad interim and as Humanitarian Coordinator.

Essential personnel are already deployed in Tripoli. The senior management of the Mission — including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Special Representative, the Chief of Staff, the Chief Political Advisor, the Chief Police Advisor and the Chief of Mission Support — are in place, with political officers in Benghazi as well as in Tripoli.

The Chief of my Department's Electoral Assistance Division accompanied Special Representative Martin to Tripoli last week for meetings with members of the NTC and other Libyan interlocutors. The first electoral experts will arrive in Libya this week to further assess electoral needs and to discuss assistance necessary to support Libyan national efforts. In the coming days, senior human rights experts will follow up with the Libyan transitional authorities and civil society on human rights priorities, including on issues relating to transitional justice.

With the assistance of the Department of Safety and Security and the Department of Field Support, initial security and logistical constraints are being overcome. Meanwhile, discussions are under way with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a status-of-mission agreement that establishes the rights and privileges of United Nations personnel in Libya.

UNSMIL has also begun to implement one of its key mandated tasks to, "coordinate support that may be requested from other multilateral and bilateral actors" (resolution 2009 (2011), para. 12 (f)). On 20 September, following the high-level meeting on Libya, a technical coordination meeting was held, co-chaired by Mr. Ahmed Jehani, Chairman of the Libya NTC stabilization team, and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ian Martin. Mr. Jehani reiterated the NTC's request that the international community coordinate its assistance to Libya under the leadership of the United Nations and in the areas of priority identified by the interim authorities. He was unequivocal in stressing the fact that the assessment of transitional requirements would be conducted under the leadership of the NTC. A first meeting of the friends of Libya in Tripoli will be convened this week.

On the humanitarian front, since mid-August at least 60,000 new displacements of Libyans have been recorded as fighting intensified around Sirte and Bani Walid. Requests for humanitarian support received from local authorities indicate urgent humanitarian needs for water, health items, food and some non-food assistance. Humanitarian efforts are ongoing in areas where they are most needed. United Nations agencies have delivered food assistance to 117,000 vulnerable people, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Bani Walid, southern Libya, Sirte and Tawarga, and to migrant workers. Food stocks have been pre-positioned in Tripoli, Benghazi and Misrata, ready

for distribution to currently inaccessible areas when the situation permits. Additionally, water is being trucked to some 40,000 displaced people from Bani Walid. Medical kits have been deployed to IDP-affected areas that are sufficient to cover those populations for the next three months. These services will be continued until more sustainable solutions are identified.

We are also concerned about reports of forced displacements of groups of civilians among the Tawergha and Gwaliush peoples, who have been perceived as loyal to Al-Qadhafi. NTC efforts must become effective in ensuring that all armed forces respect the rights of civilian populations of any background and that international humanitarian law is fully respected.

Libya faces many challenges in the post-conflict phase, but I am confident that the Libyan people will overcome them with our collective support and assistance. The three-month mandate given to the United Nations Mission offers us an opportunity to provide immediate assistance and advice to the NTC and to engage with Libyan civil society. It will also provide time to assure that any long-term mission that the Secretary-General may propose to the Security Council can be designed to provide effective assistance to the Libyan people for the longer term and to closely reflect Libyan ownership and Libyan wishes. We look forward to the NTC forming an interim Government in the near future and assigning interlocutors to enable us to engage with them and to provide the required assistance and advice, as needed, in the priority areas that have identified.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Moraes Cabral.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): First of all, I would like to welcome Mr. Jibril to the Council's meeting today.

In accordance with paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011), of 26 February, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of the Committee established pursuant to that resolution. The report covers the period from 28 June to 26 September.

Allow me to begin by noting that by its resolution 2009 (2011), adopted just 10 days ago (see S/PV.6620), the Council modified the measures previously imposed

in relation to Libya. Among other things, the Council introduced additional exceptions to the arms embargo, removed the names of the Libyan National Oil Corporation and the Zueitina Oil Company from the asset freeze list, while partially relaxing the financial restrictions in connection with the other listed entities and lifting the ban on flights of Libyan aircraft. The Committee will thus be monitoring those measures, as modified.

During the reporting period, the Committee convened three informal consultations — on 7 July, 18 July and 14 September. Those informal consultations were aimed to discuss the scope and application of the arms embargo; to hear a briefing by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on the potential impact of sanctions on the civilian population in Libya; to hear a presentation by the Panel of Experts on its interim report and to go over pending requests for guidance from Member States.

I would like to elaborate further on the informal consultations of 14 September. Following a recap of its findings up to 11 August, the Panel presented 11 recommendations, with four relating to the assets freeze, six relating to the arms embargo and one relating to a procedural matter concerning communication with the Committee. In the discussion that ensued, it was stressed, among other things, that the Panel could assist the Committee by closely monitoring the soon-to-be modified asset freeze, the illicit flows of arms out of Libya and the implementation of the travel ban. The Panel was asked to look both backwards and forward in investigating incidents of non-compliance.

It was also suggested that the Panel build a cooperative relationship with the new Libyan Government and establish some form of coordination with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. The Panel, on its part, emphasized the importance of continual access to Libya for the effectiveness of its work, with which the members of the Committee agreed.

The Committee has dealt with a number of written communications from Member States, most of which relate to the financial restrictions. In sum, the Committee expressed no objection to 11 notifications pertaining to the asset freeze under the basic expenses provision set out in paragraph 19(a) of resolution 1970 (2011). It approved 41 requests for an exception to that

measure, under the extraordinary expenses provision set out in paragraph 19(b) of the resolution; it acknowledged receipt of one notification under the lien or judgment provision set out in paragraph 19(c) of the resolution; and it acknowledged receipt of 10 notifications under the prior contracts provision set out in paragraph 21 of the same resolution.

I should like to highlight here that in its resolution 2009 (2011), the Council recalled its determination to ensure that assets frozen pursuant to resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011) shall as soon as possible be made available to and for the benefit of the people of Libya, and welcomed steps taken by the Committee and Member States in that regard. Indeed, under the extraordinary expenses provision, more than \$16 billion has already been unfrozen through the Committee for the humanitarian needs of the Libyan people.

Moreover, in paragraph 19 of resolution 2009 (2011), the Council decided that the Committee shall, in consultation with the Libyan authorities, lift the designation of the Libyan Arab Foreign Bank, the Libyan Investment Authority and the Libyan Africa Investment Portfolio as soon as practical; and the members of the Committee will be working towards this goal.

With respect to the arms embargo, the Committee approved five requests for an exception to that measure, in accordance with paragraph 9(a) of resolution 1970 (2011), and acknowledged one notification pursuant to paragraph 9(b) of the resolution. In the context of the enforcement of the embargo, the Committee has thus far received a total of 22 reports of inspections of cargo on board vessels heading to Libya.

Finally, during the period under review the Committee has answered seven requests for guidance on aspects of the asset freeze and it has received 21 reports from Member States on the implementation of this measure, as well as the arms embargo and travel ban, thereby bringing the total number of such reports to 51.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ambassador Moraes Cabral for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mahmoud Jibril, Chairman of the Executive Office of the National Transitional Council.

Mr. Jibril (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me first of all to warmly thank the Security Council on behalf of my country's delegation and of the National Transitional Council (NTC), the sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people. We are very grateful for the Council's adoption of two historic resolutions, which have clearly contributed to the protection of the lives of thousands of innocent civilians. Thanks to those two resolutions, we — with God's grace — have been able to protect and save those civilians.

Resolution 1973 (2011) in particular has helped us in that endeavour. Although many would consider it to be in implementation of the United Nations Charter, from a strictly juridical point of view, the resolution was — for us certainly — in implementation of an ethical law rather than of the Charter itself. The consensus that was reached by the international community under that resolution and the ensuing international campaign to protect civilians in my country represent, in our view, an overwhelming victory for the rule of international ethics. It is a precedent that we hope will be followed by others and by initiatives to protect innocent civilians, wherever they are and every time they are the target of crimes of genocide or crimes against humanity, perpetrated by dictators wherever they are.

Although some people think that the Al-Qadhafi regime fell with the fall of the capital and other cities, it is still true that the mission is far from accomplished. Al-Qadhafi's battalions continue to kill innocent civilians in three distinct regions of our country — in Sirte, in Bani Walid and yesterday in Ghadamis — and therefore the very foundations of resolution 1973 (2011) remain valid. In that regard, we would like to thank NATO for its decision to extend its mission for an additional 90 days.

Secondly, Al-Qadhafi is still at large and possesses huge amounts of money and gold. The simple fact that he is still free and that he has such wealth at his disposal means that he is still capable of destabilizing the situation, not only within my country but also in the Sahel region and the African desert. It is no exaggeration to say that even beyond the African continent, Al-Qadhafi, with the means and assets has available to him, could resume his terrorist practices by distributing arms across the continent in order to justify his prediction that his absence from the political

stage would be synonymous with the expansion of Al-Qaida and extremism throughout Africa.

I want to draw the Council's attention to that real threat, because his active existence is a force to be dealt with. He and his sons are able to move freely, and that could lead to greater destabilization in the region until they and their acolytes are apprehended. For that reason, his arrest is imperative to re-establishing stability throughout the region, not only within Libya.

The third factor for instability that I would like to mention — known to everyone here — is the spread of weapons not only in my country, but in neighbouring countries too. One of the main tasks of the NTC and the provisional Government will be to collect those arms and prevent their further distribution. That will be a first step towards stabilizing the situation, not only in the capital but also in all Libyan towns and cities. Rumours and recently published reports of the presence of certain chemical substances and stockpiles of chemical weapons purportedly discovered in the south of the country are a concern not only to the international community but also, first and foremost, to us and to innocent civilians living in areas within Libya where such substances are stockpiled.

There are numerous factors fuelling instability, but I assert with certainty that one principal factor is the ongoing freeze of Libyan monies and assets — assets that belong to the Libyan people — pursuant to United Nations resolutions. Although we highly appreciate the work and measures undertaken recently by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) to unfreeze \$16 billion and remove some Libyan companies from the embargo list, the road ahead remains very long.

For the first six months of our blessed revolution, the National Transitional Council existed to fight a dictatorial regime. The current and future legitimacy of the NTC will depend entirely not only on its fight against a despotic regime, but also on its capacity to meet the basic needs of citizens. The inability of the NTC or the provisional Government to provide those basic services because of a lack of funding could affect its very foundations and legitimacy, which the Security Council recognized in the historic resolution 2009 (2011), re-establishing its seat at the United Nations as the sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people.

Continuing the assets freeze could be very risky because it could inhibit the efforts of the National

Transitional Council to perform its functions. I ask the Security Council to totally lift the assets freeze as soon as possible, because the circumstances that applied when resolution 1970 (2011) was adopted no longer exist. That resolution sought to deprive the Al-Qadhafi regime of the funds, assets and authority that enabled it to buy weapons, which it turned on innocent people. Al-Qadhafi is no longer part of the regime. It is true that he still has vast wealth. However, that said, the ones who are being deprived of those assets and wealth are the Libyan people, on whose behalf the resolution was adopted in order to enable them to receive protection and save lives.

Let me recall that the circumstances that prevailed before the resolution was adopted no longer exist. It is therefore imperative to adopt a resolution that seeks to lift the freeze fully on those assets and funds so that the Libyan people can begin their reconstruction process. There are a number of injured people who have to be treated. There are many wounded people who are awaiting artificial limbs. Many houses have been destroyed, with many people displaced. Also, many schools have been destroyed and need to be rebuilt. Many power plants are down. Much infrastructure, including bridges and roads, has been demolished. Social, economic, material and human infrastructure have completely collapsed or been incapacitated. All of this will require money to rebuild.

With regard to the formation of the provisional Government, we cannot really talk about that unless it has the necessary funds to fulfil its functions. We cannot talk about Government structures if they turn out to be ineffective and unable to provide citizens with the basic necessities of life, to collect weapons from the streets, to form a national army incorporating all existing military forces and to put in place robust security and police forces that are able to carry out their duties and establish security in all cities and towns. All that will be in vain if the financial resources are not available, since the lack of such resources would be a major obstacle to the effectiveness of any Government, transitional or otherwise.

Moreover, today, a number of Governments throughout the world — poor Governments that do not have many resources available — are not able to do

anything. Poverty, need and want therefore remain destabilizing factors in those countries, even in they are not experiencing conflict.

With regard to human rights violations and the ill-treatment of migrant workers in my country, I am obliged now to now give a clear picture of the situation. From the very beginning, the National Transitional Council expressed its commitment to the relevant human rights instruments and principles. We have reaffirmed our intention to avoid mistreatment of any foreigners in my country. However, the incidents that have occurred in no way translate into a systematic policy of the NTC, which rejects such a policy. However, we must be allowed to establish security services, a strong national army and a robust police force because those will help us to put an end to such violations and wherever and whenever they occur.

Such vengeful acts do not reflect the policy of the National Transitional Council. They are horrendous acts that we vehemently condemn and reject, as we have done in the past and intend to do in the future. Investigations to resolve them will continue, but we still need substantial means to carry out such investigations. That brings me back to the need to provide us with the appropriate financial and economic resources so that we can act, and do so effectively.

In reiterating my thanks, I would also like to recall that the assistance provided to the National Transitional Council is one issue and that the means for us to meet deadlines is another matter. We have invested in many tasks, but, once again, we need the necessary financial resources to accomplish all of them. The Libyan people must have their resources and other monies due them restored so that they can march together towards the future.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Jibreel for his statement.

There are no further speakers inscribed on the list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.



Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6623rd meeting

Tuesday, 27 September 2011, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Mikati	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalic
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Under rule 39 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Before I give the floor to Mr. Pascoe, I should like to make some brief introductory remarks in my national capacity as the Prime Minister of Lebanon.

I am pleased to participate in this meeting today. I have come from a region where the winds of change are blowing. Indeed, yesterday the Palestinian Spring train left the station, with its people asking for an end to decades of historical injustice and continued occupation; appealing to the world to recognize the Palestinians' right to have, as do all the peoples of the world, an independent State on their land; and requesting that such a State take its normal and natural place as a full Member of the United Nations. This is but an expression of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination — a right that was endorsed by the General Assembly more than a quarter of a century ago.

Palestine, as all here may well know, meets all the criteria required to become a State under international law: a people, a land, a Government and the ability to establish relations with other States. But it is an occupied State, and we must therefore support the efforts of the State of Palestine and its people to end the occupation, achieve independence and return to their homeland.

The Palestinians have chosen negotiations over what have become known as final-status issues, namely, Jerusalem, refugees, security, borders, settlements and water. Those negotiations are still coming up against Israel's negativity and intransigence. The greatest danger to the future of peace on the land of Palestine is posed by Israel's practices — its violations of international law and of the resolutions of

the United Nations. It continues its settlement activities, expelling people, demolishing homes and confiscating land as well as controlling water resources. It continues to build the separation wall and to change the geographic and demographic features of East Jerusalem, in an attempt to erase its Arab identity.

At their summit meeting held in Beirut in 2002, the Arabs unanimously adopted a strategic decision to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), the Madrid terms of reference and the principle of land for peace. That decision later became known as the Arab Peace Initiative, which was launched by the Saudi monarch, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and endorsed by the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Such a comprehensive peace must also include the full withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Golan to the borders of 4 June 1967, in implementation of international resolutions and under resolution 497 (1981), which declares null and void any act by Israel that changes the legal, physical or demographic status of the Golan.

In that context, Lebanon supports the right of Syria to recover all its occupied land. Lebanon, having witnessed the events in Syria today, reaffirms that it wishes to see the territorial integrity of Syria and its people and the safety and security of its citizens.

As far as Lebanon is concerned, a comprehensive peace requires a full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Lebanese territory in the south, especially the Shab'a farms, the Kfar Shuba hills and the northern part of Al-Ghajar village. In that context, we reaffirm Lebanon's commitment to resolution 1701 (2006) and all its provisions. We reiterate our call on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel to fulfil its obligations under the resolution, including full withdrawal; an end to its violations of Lebanese sovereignty by land, sea and air; and transitioning from a halt in hostilities to a full ceasefire and complete cooperation with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in delineating the remainder of the Blue Line. Lebanon reaffirms its right to delineate its own maritime borders and to exploit the natural resources, especially oil and gas, in its territorial waters and exclusive economic zone.

Here, I pay tribute to the forces of UNIFIL and reiterate Lebanon's condemnation of all aggression

against them. I honour their sacrifices and affirm the ongoing cooperation and coordination between the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, which will always be welcome in the Lebanese South.

With respect to Lebanon's international relations, I confirm the statement made a few days ago by President Sleiman of the Lebanese Republic to the General Assembly, to the effect that Lebanon, a founding Member of the United Nations that respects the primacy of international law, is fully committed to respecting all resolutions of international legitimacy, including those relating to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, in accordance with the ministerial statements issued by successive Lebanese Governments.

We hope that the Security Council will always be a bulwark of defence of the weak against the strong and the victim against the usurper. Members of the Council may rest assured that Lebanon will always seek the path of justice towards peace and remain a land of freedom, convergence and moderation.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Pascoe.

Mr. Pascoe: More than a week of intensive diplomacy at the United Nations has underscored the institutional readiness of the Palestinian Authority to run a State and seen the Palestinian President apply for membership for a State of Palestine in the United Nations. The Quartet has noted this application, while calling for resumed negotiations and urging concrete proposals from the parties on territory and security within three months of talks resuming. The Quartet reaffirmed the international legal basis for the peace process and its support, expressed on 20 May, for the vision of Israeli-Palestinian peace outlined by President Obama. It also urged the parties to avoid provocations on the ground.

Judging by the passions of last week, the parties remain far apart. No one can deny the depth of their dispute, but there are now some building blocks in place that could help make negotiations more effective than before. These include a clear timetable, expectations that the parties must come forward with proposals, and an active role for the Quartet. It will not be easy to chart a way forward, but now is again the time for everyone to give diplomacy a chance.

Let me begin by noting an important international success story. The Palestinian Authority is capable of running a State. This strong international consensus was clear at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee on 18 September here in New York. The meeting confirmed the assessments of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process of the capability of the Palestinian Authority. The efforts to build robust State institutions and revive the Palestinian economy have brought real security and economic improvements. We commend President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad on this achievement. The Palestinian Authority has achieved what it set out to do two years ago, and this must be noted, preserved and built upon.

For this reason, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting urged greater facilitation by the Israeli Government, including enhanced measures to enable private sector growth in the West Bank and Gaza; continued, predictable and improved revenue transfers from Israel; and allowing Area C to develop. The meeting expressed concern over the fiscal situation, which many attributed to structural constraints on the private sector, while underscoring the importance of donor support to the Palestinian Authority. In this regard, I welcome the \$200 million transferred by Saudi Arabia for the Palestinian Authority's recurrent expenditures and development spending. With a \$150 million financing gap for the remainder of the year, additional and timely donor support to meet the Authority's needs is critical, including to ensure payment of salaries and contracts.

When meeting last Friday, Quartet principals stated that a donors conference should be held to give further impetus to the State-building agenda. They also proposed, as part of the context of renewed negotiations, to identify additional steps they can support individually and collectively so as to secure significantly greater independence and sovereignty for the Palestinian Authority over its affairs.

I stress the State-building achievements for a reason. The main obstacles to a Palestinian State are not institutional, but political: the unresolved issues in the conflict between the parties, the continuing Israeli occupation, and the ongoing Palestinian divide.

Last Friday, 23 September, President Abbas submitted to the Secretary-General an application for

membership for a State of Palestine in the United Nations. In accordance with the Charter and the rules of procedure, the Secretary-General transmitted the application to the President of the Security Council on the same day and sent a copy to the President of the General Assembly. The Secretary-General respects the prerogatives of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The application is now before the Council; it is members' issue to decide.

As these deliberations continue, we must spare no effort to help the parties back to the negotiating table. The Quartet will now work for a preparatory meeting of the parties within a month to agree on an agenda and a method of proceeding. Let me appeal to both parties to agree to move forward. The Quartet made clear that it would expect the parties to come forward with comprehensive proposals on territory and security within three months of resumed negotiations.

This would be a moment where the parties would be truly tested in their readiness to make serious proposals that address the core concerns of the other. It is also designed to ensure that the talks move quickly to the heart of the matters in dispute. The goal would be to make substantial progress within six months, with a Moscow conference held at the appropriate time, and to reach an agreement not later than the end of 2012.

Special Coordinatorerry played an active role with the other Quartet envoys and Quartet Representative Blair in developing this framework. As the Quartet has made clear, the parties should refrain from provocative actions if negotiations are to be effective. It has also reiterated the obligations of both parties under the Road Map.

Resuming negotiations and making progress is easier said than done, of course, and this was evident in the eloquent and deeply felt speeches of both leaders to the General Assembly. Yet despite frustrations and lack of trust, each leader extended his hand for peace, and both parties have undertaken to review carefully the Quartet call. We hope that, whatever its reservations, each side will now engage towards the preparatory meeting envisaged by the Quartet. The United Nations intends to be a full participant in this effort, and Special Coordinatorerry has already returned to the region to follow up with both parties and his Quartet partners.

I will not give a detailed report of developments on the ground this month in my briefing today, but I do

wish to highlight a few key matters. During the reporting period, a total of two Palestinians were killed, including one militant, while 102 Palestinians, including 12 children, were injured, and two Israeli Defense Forces personnel and 10 Israeli civilians were injured, illustrating the continuing cost of the ongoing conflict.

In the current atmosphere, it is essential that all sides impress on their security forces and civilian populations the need to act responsibly. They must do their utmost to avoid escalation and take early action to defuse possible tensions. I commend the peaceful nature of the large public demonstrations held in support of the application for Palestinian membership in the main Palestinian cities in the West Bank.

Extremists on both sides must not be allowed to inflame the situation. The past month has seen an upsurge in Israeli settler violence, including, on 5 September, the fifth arson attack on a mosque in the past two months. The rule of law must be enforced by Israeli authorities against this phenomenon. Security must also be ensured for Israelis, as was underscored by a car and knife attack in Tel Aviv by a West Bank Palestinian on 29 August, and by Israeli reports that they had foiled a suicide attack in August in Jerusalem.

One hundred housing new units were approved in the Beit Aryeh settlement in the northern West Bank since the last briefing. The Israeli authorities also announced their intention to expropriate 200 acres of land around a settler outpost in the West Bank. More Palestinian structures in Area C have been demolished to date in 2011 than in either of the past two years. Today's decision by the Jerusalem District Planning Committee to advance planning for a large number of units in East Jerusalem is of particular concern. We have repeatedly stated that settlement activity is illegal and contrary to Israel's Road Map commitments.

In Gaza, despite the restoration of an uneasy calm in late August, 18 rockets, including three Grad rockets, were fired into Israel during the reporting period. We condemn these indiscriminate attacks, which must cease. During the same period, Israeli forces conducted four incursions and two airstrikes into Gaza, resulting in six Palestinian civilians being injured, including three children. We continue to urge Israel to show maximum restraint.

We also continue to call for further easing of Israeli closure measures on Gaza, particularly in regard

to the importation of construction materials, exports and the freedom of movement of people.

We can report no movement on Palestinian reconciliation based on Palestinian Liberation Organization commitments, although President Abbas stated that he hopes that the implementation of the reconciliation accord will be accelerated in the coming weeks. There also has been no progress regarding access to or the release of Staff Sergeant Shalit, who remains in Hamas captivity.

Allow me to comment briefly on Lebanon, where the overall security situation remained calm. On 20 September, in the West Bekaa, the Lebanese Internal Security Forces arrested four men and killed two others suspected to have links with the kidnappers of the seven Estonian nationals who had been abducted in March and released in July. The situation in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) area of operations has remained generally stable. However, UNIFIL's freedom of movement was impeded in an incident on 13 September in the vicinity of the village of Ayta ash-Sha'b, which resulted in the light injury of one UNIFIL soldier.

Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace continued on an almost daily basis, although at a diminished pace.

We welcome the strong commitment to the Special Tribunal expressed by President Suleiman in his address to the General Assembly (see A/66/PV.11) and reiterated by Prime Minister Mikati today.

In northern Lebanon, the United Nations continues to coordinate closely with the Government of Lebanon on the provision of assistance to displaced Syrian nationals, as well as on matters of protection and determination of their status. Their number, by our count, has reached 3,780 people.

The increase in Syrian nationals seeking refuge across the border is a reflection of the escalating political and human rights crisis in Syria, which has killed at least 2,700 people since March. The polarization continues to deepen between the Syrian Government, which appears determined to pursue its policy of violent repression despite international and regional calls to change course, and a growing popular opposition that has continued to organize protests across the country.

On 15 September, a coalition of Syrian opposition leaders announced the formation of a Syrian national council and released a national consensus charter affirming the peaceful, inclusive and non-sectarian character of the Syrian uprising and committing to the establishment of a modern State that will guarantee the rule of law and respect for human rights. We are aware of reports of increased defections from within the army and the continued violence against and mistreatment of activists and their supporters.

On 12 September, the President of the United Nations Human Rights Council appointed three experts to form the international commission of inquiry mandated by the Council on 23 August. They will meet this week in Geneva to discuss their programme and methods of work, and establish contacts with relevant stakeholders. We underlined the importance of accountability for all human rights violations committed in Syria since March, and hope that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic will extend full cooperation to the Commission.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.



Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6624th meeting

Wednesday, 28 September 2011, 9.30 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Admission of new Members

Note by the Secretary-General (S/2011/592)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Admission of new Members

Note by the Secretary-General (S/2011/592)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

In a letter dated 23 September 2011 addressed to the Secretary-General, the application of Palestine for admission to membership in the United Nations was submitted by its President. That letter has been circulated as an attachment to a note by the Secretary-General, contained in document S/2011/592.

Under the provisions of rule 59 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, unless the Council decides otherwise, an application for membership shall be referred by the President of the Council to the Committee on the Admission of New Members. Accordingly, unless I hear a proposal to the contrary, I shall refer the application of Palestine to the Committee on the Admission of New Members for examination and report.

As I hear no objection, it is so decided.

I would propose that the Committee on the Admission of New Members meet on Friday, 30 September 2011 at 10 a.m. in Conference Room 1 in the North Lawn Building to consider the application of Palestine for membership in the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 9.40 a.m.





Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6625th meeting

Thursday, 29 September 2011, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2011/590)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2011/590)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Zalmai Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/590, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. De Mistura.

Mr. De Mistura: I thank Minister Rassoul for being with us today. His presence sends a strong signal at a time when, as the Lebanese presidency has reminded us, Afghanistan is going through a terrible time. His presence reminds us of the departure of Mr. Rabbani, and we need to hear from him about how Afghanistan will once again confront a difficult moment.

We meet today at a sad moment indeed for the people of Afghanistan. The recent killing of former President and head of the High Peace Council, Mr. Rabbani, who was a friend to many of us and

highly respected by us all, was a shock to all of us. But Afghanistan and the Afghans have shown so many times over thousands of years the capacity to recover again and again from tragic and sad losses, and we know and feel that their resolve in the search for peace will not be deterred. That was said recently by President Karzai himself.

It remains unclear who was behind this attack. As Mr. Rabbani's son said at the funeral in Kabul, we must continue to work for peace — the same peace that Mr. Rabbani had started and to which he had committed himself and sacrificed his life in his role as Chairman of the High Peace Council. History shows that reconciliation efforts are particularly vulnerable to attack when they start to gain traction and precisely for that reason. In recent years, there has been increased interest shown by many relevant parties in the idea of a peace process. Under Mr. Rabbani's leadership, the High Peace Council in fact started to generate a form of dialogue that was definitely needed to address the trust deficit before talks could become more concrete.

The road to peace is never smooth. We know that. The death of Mr. Rabbani is not the end of the peace process. That has been said by many Afghans, in particular the highest authorities of the country. This is a moment for the Afghans to recalibrate — a moment that calls for national unity among the leaders and people of Afghanistan as they again endure another tragic loss.

I myself was recently invited to a showing of an Afghan film celebrating the achievements of four young Afghans who, with no previous experience and without the support of outsiders, were able to overcome the highest physical obstacle in Afghanistan to become the first team of Afghans to stand on the top of Mount Nushaq, the highest mountain in the country. That serves as a reminder to all of us that the Afghan Government and people, with the support of others like us, will eventually be able to work together to find a peaceful solution to their problems.

There is no alternative to a political solution. There is a window of opportunity, albeit very narrow and clearly fragile, for talks to begin, and we need to pursue it. Peace is not an event but a process that, if it is to be sustainable and deliver lasting results, must be broad-based and include Afghans from all walks of life, including civil society. The priority must continue to be a dialogue among and led by Afghans themselves.

with non-Afghans like us playing a supporting role, if and when required.

At the national level and as proof of its continued commitment to searching for peace, we support the Afghan Government and hope that it will proceed with the swift appointment of an authoritative voice not to replace Mr. Rabbani — who is not replaceable — but to persist in the efforts he led within the High Peace Council.

Peace efforts are also very much about redressing local grievances. Here, I should like to pay my respects to and single out Minister Stanekzai, who is a friend to whom we wish a swift recovery from his wounds. His efforts to advance the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme as a critical process at the local level have been crucial and need to continue as a dispute resolution mechanism, in addition to other, similar mechanisms. That is why we wish to praise and commend the timely convening of a recent conference on the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme in Kandahar, which offered an opportunity to further promote reintegration, particularly in the South where, in all frankness, there has been less progress than in the northern part of the country.

Furthermore, regarding the Programme, we should remain vigilant in ensuring a proper and rigorous vetting mechanism. Our memories of the tragic events in Kandahar, along with our experience in Mazar-e-Sharif and now with Mr. Rabbani, remind us of how important vetting can and should be.

On a positive note with respect to the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army, we have noticed increasing positive progress in the development of both institutions. They have been showing that they are capable of taking on more security responsibilities and of becoming more self-sustaining. That is why, in spite of all these incidents, the transition is going forward. Recent security incidents, while regrettable due to the loss of life, have also shown the increased ability of the Afghan national security system to manage such incidents in a controlled and proportionate manner. I shall give another personal example of that, if I may.

In August, among the many attacks that had taken place, there was an attack in Abdul Haq Square that lasted several hours. On that occasion, a Lieutenant Colonel who was the chief police officer in the area embraced the suicide attacker who was moving

towards the people in the square; he exploded with him and died. In doing so, he saved many lives, including those of his own team. These are the types of incidents that make us foreigners in Kabul feel that it is not mere rhetoric to say that the Afghan National Police is growing in the respect it enjoys from the people and in the fulfilment of its functions.

The human cost in terms of the lives of average Afghans is still too high, as President Karzai is constantly reminding us. While security incidents, and certainly military incidents, may be fewer in number — and there is no question about that, as compared with the past — the overall level of civilian casualties, is still, unfortunately, too high; even one civilian casualty is one too many. We are increasingly concerned about the rising number of casualties and the use of certain tactics, particularly by the Taliban and by the insurgents, because — and we have been seeing this — they are indiscriminately targeting the civilian population.

Errors still occur, but there is an improvement in the right direction; however, the need for a surge in the protection of civilians needs to be our constant focus. The Afghan State, which has done a great deal, must continue to distinguish itself by putting respect for universal human rights at the centre of its own policies and practices, including in the treatment of prisoners and detainees, an area in which we have already seen substantial and encouraging movement in the right direction. And when such progress takes place, we should acknowledge it, as in the case of the very encouraging improved regulation on women's shelters, which could potentially go a long way towards protecting Afghan women and girls, who often have been at risk of violence and abuse.

Today we are having an important meeting at a very sad and important moment in Afghan history. This is one of the meetings being held in preparation for two crucial meetings that will be convened later this year, one in Istanbul and the other in Bonn. We hope that they will be an opportunity for a collective determination to support and reassure the Afghan Government and people that we will be with them in the long run. It is our responsibility to ensure that the upcoming conferences, particularly the two that I mentioned, are not ceremonial — we know that they are not going to be ceremonial — but complementary, substantive and forward-looking.

The Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan, to be held on 2 November, will be an important rendezvous that we hope will represent an opportunity for representatives of the region to gather in Istanbul with the intent of setting in motion measures to establish what is being defined as a benign regional order, one in which Afghanistan and its neighbours will exchange mutual assurances aimed at creating a stable and prosperous heart of Asia.

Afghanistan feels, and we share those feelings, that it should not be the subject of but the catalyst for this conference, at which the region can discuss concrete, not theoretical, ways to develop confidence-building measures aimed at addressing common challenges. A great deal of constructive work has been done already, particularly on the economic side. I think that is what the Istanbul conference aspires to address, in keeping with the wishes of the Afghan people. We want to thank the Turkish authorities for their hospitality and their vision in offering this opportunity to address political and security issues as well as economic ones.

We believe that the upcoming preparatory meeting in Oslo, to be held in two days' time, will ensure that there is a clear idea among regional players and others about the possibility of brainstorming on this issue, so that we can come up with a stronger declaration, or something along those lines, in Istanbul, and possibly some type of follow-up structural approach in order to ensure that whatever is discussed in Istanbul does not remain just a statement.

UNAMA encourages and supports those efforts, of which it is a part, while, of course, recognizing the strong leadership of the two co-chairs, particularly Afghanistan and Turkey. We support all initiatives, including the New Silk Road, that are in the interest of Afghanistan, its neighbours and the broader region, in areas where we should be investing our attention.

Only trust among Afghanistan and its neighbours and trust among individuals can create an atmosphere in which private investment becomes more active and thrives, as we hope it will.

We are looking forward to the Bonn conference, to be held on 5 December. It has the potential to have a historic impact, although, as always, we should be cautious in our expectations; but our hopes are very high. This will be a crucial opportunity for assessing the transition, which is moving ahead. By that time we

will also have had other meetings in other forums where the Afghan authorities and the International Security Assistance Force will make clear their views on how to substantially, we hope, increase the transition momentum; promote support beyond 2014, because they need to feel that they will not be abandoned once again; and facilitate whatever progress has been made, hopefully in the direction of reconciliation.

There were clouds on the horizon last time I had the honour and the privilege of meeting with Council members here. The first cloud was the electoral follow-up and the parliamentary crisis, and the other was related to the Kabul Bank. I do not wish to be perceived as overly optimistic, but I think that I am honest enough to tell the Council that both clouds are dissipating.

The first cloud is dissipating thanks to a very courageous and wise decision by President Karzai. Indeed, the Independent Electoral Commission was recognized as the final authority on electoral issues, as in any other part of the world where democracy is moving in the right direction. We have therefore come to the conclusion of a difficult but probably useful trip related to the electoral process.

I believe that we will be on a much smoother path for the next elections, whenever they take place, because recognizing that the Independent Electoral Commission is the final authority is a very good starting point for future elections and for the democratic process of the separation of powers in Afghanistan, like anywhere else. So there is good movement in the right direction. Nothing is perfect — of course, nothing is perfect anywhere, not only in Afghanistan — but there is movement in the right direction, and we feel that the cloud is moving away.

On the issue of the Kabul Bank, we see light, strong light coming from behind the cloud, to the point where sometimes it does not even look like a cloud, frankly. There is a possibility of seeing an agreement in principle on an International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, and we believe that can be reached through the ongoing negotiations. An IMF technical mission will arrive in Kabul tomorrow, 30 September, and stay there for 10 days to finalize discussions. The IMF Board meeting is scheduled for mid-November. That also means that another important element, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which is

basically a special window of financial support for the short-term funding of key national priority programmes, is looking much more positive. Additional funds are required, but already many countries have indicated that they will continue to fund it while waiting for the cloud to totally disappear.

In that context, I think that, along with my friend the Minister of Finance, we are likely to be able to co-chair and convene a joint coordination and monitoring board, which is a kind of common board between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community on joint economic activities, which has been suspended during this period. We hope to do this in November, before the Bonn conference.

With respect to the review, which, as members are aware, we take very seriously — and the Afghan authorities, rightly, also take very seriously — we will continue to work to ensure that the terms of reference are satisfactory to everyone, in particular to the Afghan authorities, and work in close cooperation with them and, of course, with full respect for the Security Council mandate.

On the humanitarian front, although we recognize that there are many other areas in the world where humanitarian priorities require the Council's attention, we believe that the drought is an issue of concern. The humanitarian community, together with the Afghan authorities, will need to keep a close eye on the situation since, in addition to insecurity, the drought may produce food shortages. That is why we look forward to seeing the outcome of the 2011 consolidated appeals emergency revision, which focuses particularly on the issue of drought.

With regard to combating narcotics, I will never cease to remind the Council that current efforts are not sufficient and that the issue remains serious both for the Afghans as well as, quite frankly, neighbouring countries and their people.

Finally, the next three months are likely to be very challenging. From a security point of view, I am afraid, the writing on the wall is clear. We will have to endure, resist and go forward even if a pattern of security challenges is likely to emerge. We are also going to have other kinds of opportunities, such as transition, second tranche, Istanbul and Bonn. When I will have the honour to return here in December to deliver my last briefing in my current capacity, I hope I

will be able to bring good news. The Afghans deserve nothing else.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. De Mistura for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Zalmi Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

Mr. Rassoul (Afghanistan): I wish to begin by congratulating you, Sir, and the Government of Lebanon on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of September. I also thank my good friend Special Representative Staffan De Mistura for his briefing and presentation of the Secretary-General's report on Afghanistan (S/2011/590).

I am pleased to have the opportunity to address the Council once again. Today's meeting takes place against the backdrop of yet another recent tragedy in Afghanistan. A little over a week ago, the enemies of peace in Afghanistan martyred the Chairman of the High Peace Council, former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani. Mr. Rabbani will be remembered for his distinguished service in the cause of peace in Afghanistan. But I want to assure the Council that, despite this national loss, our reconciliation process will continue. On behalf of the Afghan people and Government, I convey gratitude and appreciation for the outpouring of condolences and support received from around the world.

This year is of particular importance to Afghanistan. First, it marks 10 years since the end of the rule of the Taliban, culminating in the opening of a new chapter in our modern history defined by a concerted effort to achieve what has eluded us Afghans for too long: peace, stability and prosperity. Over the past decade, we have come a long way in our joint efforts and have much to show for our progress in building our State institutions, in ensuring our people with essential services, in enabling democracy to take root and in upholding the fundamental rights of all our citizens.

Secondly, this year we also embarked on transition, an ambitious process by which we Afghans will take full responsibility for the security of our country by the end of 2014. As President Karzai emphasized in his statement to the General Assembly last week,

“With the completion of the transition process, we Afghans and our international partners will

achieve the most strategic goal of our 10-year long partnership: the emergence of a sovereign Afghanistan that is self-reliant and the peaceful home of all Afghans; an Afghanistan that is at peace, and lives in peace with the rest of the world" (A/66/PV.18).

In addition to solid Afghan national resolve, the success of the transition process will depend on the continued support of the international community, most importantly in building the capacity of our national security institutions.

Alongside the transition of security responsibilities, we are focused on doing what is necessary to implement the economic pillar of the transition process. This will be a more difficult task, requiring more time and the sustained and long-term engagement of our international partners during and after the transition process.

In this regard, we are determined to maximize the potential offered by our natural resources for strengthening our economy. Furthermore, we have prioritized attracting foreign investments and building our infrastructure. Such efforts will enable us to play a key role in broadening, deepening and strengthening regional economic integration by reviving our historic place as the land-bridge between Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. In that connection, we are pleased that the new Silk Road initiative has gained momentum. We welcome the constructive discussion of last week's ministerial meeting here in New York, which we co-chaired with Germany and the United States.

Despite our efforts to stabilize our country, Afghans are still suffering an endless campaign of terror carried out by Afghanistan's enemies. Over the past months, terrorists have launched sophisticated attacks, including the raid on the Inter-Continental Hotel, the attacks on the NATO compound and the United States embassy in Kabul, and a chain of targeted assassinations of a number of Afghanistan's prominent and high-profile national figures.

The continued spate of attacks, which originate from terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens beyond our borders, has generated an unprecedented level of anger and frustration among a wide spectrum of Afghan society. Let me stress once again our repeated call for a definitive end to these sanctuaries, which are not only

harming Afghans, but also destabilizing the region as a whole.

To help end the conflict and meet the demands and aspirations of the Afghan people for a durable, dignified and inclusive peace, we will work to bring back to social, economic and political life all members of the armed opposition willing to renounce violence, sever ties with terrorist groups, and accept our Constitution, including respect for human rights and women's rights in particular.

Despite the assassination of Mr. Rabbani, which was intended to disrupt the peace process, the High Peace Council will pursue its mandate for peace and reconciliation. If reconciliation is to succeed, we must have the support of regional and international partners. In this connection, I emphasize the importance of a result-oriented role for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. At the same time, we wish to remind the Council that we are committed at all costs to defeating those bent on the destruction and destabilization of our country.

We have an important political calendar ahead of us. We look forward to the Istanbul and Bonn Conferences, scheduled for November and December. In Istanbul, together with the countries that make up the heart of Asia and other international partners, we will focus on defining a new vision for regional peace and development. We will do so by soliciting concrete commitments to enhancing confidence-building, security and political cooperation centred around Afghanistan. A peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan is not only an Afghan need; such an Afghanistan is an absolute precondition for peace, security and prosperity in the region.

In Bonn, we will brief the international community on our achievements over the past decade, with a specific focus on transition, reconciliation and regional cooperation. We will also share our vision for the 10 years after transition on consolidating our stability, democracy and economic development. Above all, in Bonn we will call upon the international community for continued assistance beyond 2014.

Indeed, Afghanistan is already working with our friends and allies on mapping out our enduring partnerships, including with the United States, the European Union and NATO. These partnerships will help guarantee our security, stability and future economic development.

The United Nations has played a very important role in our achievements thus far, for which we remain grateful. On the way forward, this role must be adjusted to reinforce Afghan sovereignty. We welcome all efforts to ensure a more integrated, effective and one United Nations approach, and look forward to the joint comprehensive review of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. In that connection, let me thank the Secretary-General once again for authorizing the joint review.

In conclusion, I thank all Afghanistan's partners in the international community for standing beside us in solidarity as we strive to strengthen the foundations of peace, democracy and development we have laid down in Afghanistan. Over the past decade, we have come a long way in our joint efforts, which is something we can all be proud of. But we are still not completely out of the woods. We in Afghanistan are convinced that, together with the support of the international community, we will succeed in realizing our common vision of a peaceful, stable and democratic Afghanistan, a country that is self-reliant and a factor for regional and global peace and cooperation.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan for his statement.

I now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Wittig (Germany): I wish to thank Foreign Minister Rassoul for his most valuable statement and, of course, for his presence here. Minister, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Council today.

I am also grateful to Special Representative of the Secretary-General de Mistura for his briefing. I commend him, his entire staff in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the wider United Nations family for their admirable work, which was carried out under very difficult circumstances. The support of the United Nations will remain absolutely pivotal.

Germany aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later in today's debate by the European Union.

Germany condemns in the strongest possible terms the murder of the Chair of the High Peace Council, Professor Rabbani. Allow me to reiterate the

heartfelt condolences of the Government and the people of Germany to the Afghan authorities and all Afghans. We wish Minister Stanekzai, Chief Executive of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme, and all others who were injured a very speedy recovery.

Germany welcomes the strong messages sent out by President Karzai and his Government, at this decisive moment in their unwavering determination to stay the course in the peace and reconciliation process. In that context, I wish to underline the commitment of support reiterated by the Security Council in its statement of 21 September (SC/10391).

The International Conference on Afghanistan to be held in Bonn on 5 December will be a crucial milestone for Afghanistan, as mentioned by Special Representative of the Secretary-General de Mistura and Foreign Minister Rassoul. As I outlined to the Council in July (see S/PV.6574), a core aim of the Conference is to further define the future engagement of the international community, both during and after the security transition, which will have been completed by the end of 2014. In Germany's view, security transition marks a new beginning in, not the end of, international support to Afghanistan.

Several factors need to be kept in mind. A clear and unequivocal message of long-term support to our Afghan friends is our bottom line for Bonn in terms of ensuring security, building a sustainable administration and, last but not least, fostering economic development.

On that note, we are encouraged by the continued progress in security transition. While we remain concerned about the volatile overall security environment, we note with appreciation that more and more security operations in more and more parts of Afghanistan are being handled by Afghan security forces.

Regional cooperation is of particular relevance for the success of the international Afghanistan strategy. Germany strongly supports recent initiatives to implement previous declarations on good-neighbourly relations. We particularly look forward to the Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan, to be held on 2 November. Its results will be of paramount importance for the future of regional cooperation in the heart of Asia. Germany also welcomes the bilateral steps that have been taken, particularly with Pakistan,

such as the recent formation of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Commission for Reconciliation and Peace.

As a complement to the ongoing political process, I would like to emphasize the potential of increased economic cooperation for positive change in the region. Only one week ago, in the presence of more than 15 foreign ministers, 30 delegations from the region and beyond met here in New York to formulate their common vision for a New Silk Road to increase regional economic cooperation with Afghanistan.

That vision requires sincere regional efforts to become a reality, but it will also need significant international support over time. Looking towards Bonn, the Co-chairs — Afghanistan, the United States and Germany — invite partners to contribute to charting out options for how best to turn this vision into a reality, step by step by step.

As I mentioned, the support of the international community will be required long after the transition will have ended. From that perspective, our yardstick must remain the principle of reinforcing Afghan sovereignty.

In regard to the UNAMA review process mentioned by Minister Rassoul, and in the light of the Council's March 2012 UNAMA mandate resolution, Germany looks forward to the outcome of the review. As I said earlier, the support of the United Nations will remain absolutely pivotal. In that context, we note with appreciation the continued progress of the United Nations towards delivering as one.

Let me end by giving three recent examples that underscore how cooperation between Afghanistan and its international partners to implement the Kabul process leads to continued progress on the ground, every day, despite the volatile conditions in the country.

First, despite serious setbacks, the Kabul process itself seems to be getting back on track. Germany welcomes signs that there is now greater clarity concerning the next steps that need to be taken before an International Monetary Fund programme can be approved.

Secondly, while tensions continue between and inside the different branches of Government after the first legislative elections held under Afghan leadership, there is now a solution backing the authority of the

Independent Electoral Commission that offers a prospect for improved procedures, in line with the commitments of the Government of Afghanistan to long-term electoral reform.

Thirdly, the sincere and valuable support of the Government of Afghanistan for the study undertaken by UNAMA on the treatment of detainees in several facilities managed by the Afghan security forces is highly commendable. This clearly demonstrates the common interest in the improvement of the human rights. My Government is strongly convinced that, once the report has been finalized, the Afghan Government will find the right answers — and the international community the right way to support them.

As we continue our support at the Bonn conference and beyond, Germany will continue to stand side by side with our Afghan friends.

Mr. Messone (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): My country also welcomes the presence in the Council today of Minister Zalmai Rassoul and we thank him for his important statement.

We would like to also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his briefing on the situation in Afghanistan on the basis of the report (S/2011/590) before us.

We share the strong condemnations expressed by the international community following the assassination of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani. Gabon commends his efforts as Chair of the High Peace Council and the Government. Once again, I hope that the Afghan people will continue his efforts in the passionate quest for peace.

My delegation welcomes the resolve of the Afghan authorities in seeking to rebuild confidence following this great loss. The political process of transition must run its course so that all programmes can be implemented before the 2014 deadline.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/590) that is under consideration underscores the significant developments that have held our attention in terms of dialogue and reconciliation, the political process, security, the humanitarian and human rights situation, governance and the rule of law and regional cooperation.

At the last debate in the Council, we naturally emphasized the importance of dialogue and

reconciliation in this process (see S/PV.6574). That dialogue must continue to build on confidence-building measures, and should be inclusive and participatory, particularly at this crucial time, when the negotiating terms with all the parties involved must be reviewed. To that end, my delegation welcomes the Afghan Government's readiness, as expressed in the last general debate, to finally include the Taliban in the transition process, so that they may play a constructive role in that process. We therefore call on them to respond to the hand extended to them. We welcome the measures adopted by the authorities in the political arena since the administration's inauguration in January. We of course encourage the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in their support for those efforts.

The humanitarian situation continues to be a cause for concern, given the security issues and other aggravating factors, such as the drought, which undermine the significant improvements made in this area. We call on the United Nations and the international community as a whole to continue to pay particular attention to this situation.

In order to build on the gains established through dialogue and reconciliation, it is important that we continue to work towards the goals of strengthening governance and the rule of law in the context of the Kabul Process. Here we welcome the information we have received from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zalmay Rassoul. We also commend the efforts that have been made in terms of regional cooperation, as well as the initiatives taken in that area, particularly the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Commission for Reconciliation and Peace, and, of course, the two conferences to be held at the end of the year in Istanbul and Bonn.

That said, the terrorist threat persists, and the protection of everyone involved — civilians, the political authorities and personnel from international forces, such as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) or the United Nations itself — remains a priority. The situation on the ground still requires a military and police presence in the form of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as well as the Afghan National Security Forces. ISAF's mandate is coming to an end and must be renewed. The tasks it will be assigned for the period to come will of course take into account the Afghan security forces' new strategies for securing the territory, strategies whose preparation we encourage so that effective joint

counter-terrorism operations can be conducted with ISAF through upstream military action and involve the judicial system in which the perpetrators of these crimes can be brought to justice.

I would like to conclude by once again expressing our support and appreciation of UNAMA and NATO for their important role in supporting a Government dealing with so many challenges. And naturally we endorse the Secretary-General's words of satisfaction and encouragement to his Special Representative, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, and to all the personnel at UNAMA and the United Nations team for their work on the ground. Finally, I also commend the Governments of Turkey and Germany for convening the conferences to be held in Istanbul and Bonn at the end of this year.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I thank Mr. Rassoul, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, for being here today and honouring us with his presence. We are grateful for his remarks. I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his briefing and his continuing extraordinary service. I hope he will also convey to the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) the enduring gratitude of the United States for the important work they do every day throughout Afghanistan, under considerable hardship, for the benefit of the Afghan people. We are also grateful for the important contributions of Deputy Special Representative Martin Kobler, who is on his way to Iraq to take up the post of Special Representative there.

This morning my remarks will focus on security, upcoming events that frame the 2014 transition, and the New Silk Road initiative. As we know, the United States Embassy compound in Kabul was attacked earlier this month. The Afghan National Security Forces have responsibility for Kabul, and they responded ably. They ended the assault on the Embassy; there was minimal damage to Embassy property and the compound, and no United States personnel were killed. However, the insurgent attack killed five Afghan National Police and 11 other Afghans, including children.

While the security situation in Afghanistan continues to present challenges, notably including the insurgents' continued targeting of fellow Afghans, our goal remains to gradually shift to a supporting role as

the Afghan National Security Forces continue to develop their capabilities. The deployment of additional United States military service members, together with additional troops committed by our allies and partners, has helped stabilize more of the country and shifted the momentum away from the insurgency.

Together we have made significant progress. The tragic assassination of Afghanistan's former President and Chairman of the Afghan High Peace Council, Mr. Rabbani, has only strengthened our collective resolve. We will continue to work in support of the Afghan Government and people to end the insurgency, pursue justice against those who fund, direct and carry out the violence, and realize a peaceful future for all Afghans. President Obama has been clear that the strong United States relationship with Afghanistan will extend well beyond 2014. We continue to make progress on our strategic partnership document, which outlines our long-term cooperation during the transition period and beyond. As President Obama and President Karzai reaffirmed in their meeting last week, we will have a strategic partnership between our nations that provides a long-term framework for bilateral cooperation on security, economic and social development, and institution-building.

As Afghanistan moves towards the 2014 transition, we know that the Government alone cannot grow Afghanistan's economy, so we must all continue to work to create an environment that attracts private-sector investment. Last week, Foreign Minister Rassoul, the German Foreign Minister, Mr. Guido Westerwelle, and Secretary of State Clinton met with 27 of Afghanistan's neighbours and partners to advance their shared vision of a New Silk Road. The New Silk Road is an Afghan-led venture, a rallying point for securing Afghan, regional and international commitments to support Afghanistan's transition and develop a sustainable Afghan economy that will benefit the whole region. The creation of a New Silk Road will help Afghanistan and its neighbours maximize the value of their natural resources, build human capacity, create jobs, generate revenue to pay for needed services and capitalize on the region's economic potential. The New Silk Road will also promote women entrepreneurs, since we know that sustained and successful development depends on women becoming equal partners. The international community has an important role to play in supporting Afghanistan and the region's efforts to make this vision a reality.

The New Silk Road initiative will reinforce the search for diplomatic solutions to ending the war in Afghanistan.

The year 2011 remains a pivotal one. The international Conference on Afghanistan to be held in Bonn at the end of the year will be a key opportunity for the Government of Afghanistan and its neighbours, as well as the international community, to strengthen economic cooperation in the region. This will be complemented by regional efforts to strengthen mutual confidence and neighbourly relations at the conference on security and cooperation in Istanbul in November. We also welcome the start of the comprehensive review of UNAMA's mandated activities and United Nations support in Afghanistan.

We reaffirm our gratitude for the crucial and continued commitment of the United Nations. UNAMA is working in partnership with the Government of Afghanistan for the benefit of all Afghans in their quest for peace, security and stability. We will continue to support the Afghan Government and people, regional partners and the international community as we work to establish stability and prosperity in Afghanistan and throughout the region.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. De Mistura for his analysis of the situation in Afghanistan and welcome the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Zalmay Rassoul. Allow me through him, to express our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Afghanistan for the killing on 20 September of the Chairman of the High Peace Council and former President Burhanuddin Rabbani. His death reaffirms the need to further enhance international efforts to counter terrorism, which remains the primary impediment to restoring peace and stability in Afghanistan.

I should like to say a few words on the security situation in the country. As we see it, the situation in many provinces continues to worsen. Extremists are expanding their activities. The number of killings and abductions of Afghan Government workers and simple citizens continues to grow, as eloquently expressed in the data provided in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/590). The elimination of Osama Bin Laden has not led to the anticipated breakthrough, as we see have in particular in the latest spate of terrible terrorist attacks and killings of senior Afghan officials, in the

ongoing tensions in Pakistan, and in the increase in losses of coalition and Afghan troops.

The situation is alarming in areas where responsibilities for security have been handed over to Afghans themselves, despite the fact that troops of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), as we understand it, are still there and supporting them and their combat readiness.

There is particular concern about spillover of terrorist activities from Afghanistan into the Central Asian States as a consequence of the inefficacy of NATO's anti-terrorist activities in Afghanistan, which are not eliminating the fighters but pushing them primarily from the southern to the northern regions and neighbouring States.

We share the concerns of the Secretary-General with respect to the death of peaceful citizens as a result of indiscriminate or disproportionate use of force by those involved in hostilities. Responsibility for strict compliance with the standards of international humanitarian law is borne by all parties, including ISAF.

Obviously, Afghan problems cannot be resolved by military means alone. In this regard, we support the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to establish a dialogue with the armed opposition. That process must be steered by the Afghans, and the insurgents will need to meet three well-known conditions: recognition of the Constitution, breaking with Al-Qaida and other terrorist and extremist organizations, and disarmament. Meeting these criteria is a necessary condition for delisting from the Taliban sanctions list, but no one can deny the need for the effective maintenance of the Council's sanctions as a crucial instrument in counter-terrorism.

Terrorism is closely intertwined with drug crime. Drugs are destroying Afghanistan and posing a serious threat to countries of the region and to international peace and stability. We have said repeatedly that the drug threat needs to be comprehensively countered with respect to all of its components, from destroying drug crops and reducing consumption to denying druglords access to precursors and putting them on sanctions lists.

In this context, we attach particular importance to the Paris Pact's Third Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking Routes to be held in Vienna in 8 December.

We hope that the countries represented here will take part in that conference at the level of heads of foreign policy institutions.

We welcome the beginning of transfer of security responsibility to the Afghans. It is too early to draw any conclusions, but the very fact that this responsibility is being transferred is critical. We need to focus on making the process irreversible.

The declared reduction of the number of United States troops and the gradual transfer to Afghan security forces of full responsibility for ensuring security must go hand in hand with appropriate strengthening of the capabilities of these national structures. As we see it, candidates for the army and the police must be closely vetted for loyalty; the quality of training for security forces must be enhanced and they must be provided with modern weapons.

The international military presence must be temporary. A clear timetable must be defined for drawdown and reports sent to the Security Council on the implementation of the mandate, which authorized the deployment of ISAF. The departure of NATO contingents and their allies should not be accompanied by the maintenance of any foreign military presence under any other umbrella, which would further contribute to tensions in the military and political situation in Afghanistan and the region in general.

After the withdrawal of foreign troops, it would behoove Afghanistan, as a founder of the Non-Aligned Movement, to consider restoring the status as a neutral State which it had for many decades. That idea has already been supported in the statements of a number of key players in the Afghan arena, and in the Astana Declaration issued on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on 15 June. Clearly, the initiative is up to the Afghan people themselves. It is not a matter for the near future, but for a time when the stabilization efforts in Afghanistan will have been successfully completed. But if Kabul already begins to identify the restoration of neutrality as a task for the long term, it could ease dialogue on reconciliation with the armed opposition.

Many have noted and we support the idea that there is a need to promptly relaunch the Afghan economy. That cannot be done without neighbouring States, as clearly attested to by the recent spate of regional initiatives that have been referred to here and

which will be discussed at the forthcoming Conferences in Istanbul and Bonn.

An architecture of multilateral engagement in place in Central and South Asia, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the group of four comprised of the Russian Federation, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. It would make sense to focus partners' efforts on developing and enhancing these well-proven structures of regional cooperation. Our view is that the players external to the region, in their actions in this area, should in fact respect the decisions taken by the countries of the region in the framework of these organizations.

In the context of regional economic development, we give priority to the CASA-1000 project, which established a new system of providing electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to building the TAPI gas pipeline through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. We reaffirm our readiness to engage Russian companies in its implementation. At the recent summit of the four at Dushanbe in early September, President Medvedev of the Russian Federation stated our readiness to invest \$500 million in the CASA-1000 project.

In short, this entire range of problems demonstrates the magnitude of the challenges facing the international community, specifically the United Nations Mission, in assisting and normalizing the situation in Afghanistan. We hope that the close cooperation of the United Nations with the Government of Afghanistan will continue to move forward and that the assiduous efforts of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan will be successful.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to welcome the presence of Foreign Minister Rassoul in the Security Council this morning and to thank him for his important statement. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/590) and Special Representative De Mistura for his briefing. We pay tribute to his leadership and the work of his team in Afghanistan.

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere condolences to the family of former President Rabbani. The United Kingdom condemns those responsible for this appalling and cowardly murder. They took advantage of Mr. Rabbani's hospitality and good faith.

He was a negotiator and a peacemaker, and his efforts should have been respected. Those responsible are sending a signal that they do not want to play a role in Afghanistan's future. In the light of this tragic event, we will want to consider further listings under the sanctions regime of resolution 1988 (2011), and we will continue to review very closely any request for de-listing.

President Karzai and other Afghan political leaders have pledged to continue the peace process. This is a sign of their commitment to the Afghan people. They have made clear that this attack will not derail their efforts. Instead, they are ready to engage with those elements of the insurgency that are genuinely willing to work towards a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan. I commend their stance and emphasize the United Kingdom's readiness to support that work.

Despite this shocking event, progress is being made in Afghanistan. The start of the transition process in July saw seven areas begin the process of handing over lead security to the Afghans. The latest reports of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) confirm positive progress in these areas, with the capability and capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces continuing to improve. The Special Representative reinforced that message this morning.

The recent attacks on the British Council, the United States embassy and ISAF headquarters were shocking, but demonstrated the increasing ability of the Afghan National Security Forces to respond to such events. We are on course for the next set of provinces to begin transition towards the end of this year, and it is encouraging that ISAF is keen to start the transition process in the more challenging areas of Afghanistan.

The protection of the Afghan civilian population remains at the core of our military strategy. ISAF continues to work to reduce the level of civilian casualties and has strict operating procedures both to minimize the risk of casualties occurring and to investigate thoroughly any incidents that do happen. This is in sharp contrast to the insurgency, which deliberately targets civilians and uses violent tactics to intimidate the population. Around 80 per cent of civilian casualties are caused by insurgents, and we continue to strongly condemn all such attacks.

Transition will inevitably impact upon Afghanistan's economy as income sources decline and

the costs of the Afghan National Security Forces come under national control. Although revenue is growing, it will not balance expenditure for several years. It is therefore vital that the international community be able to agree on a way to ensure continued funding for Afghanistan's security and development needs beyond 2014. Good progress has been made on a new International Monetary Fund programme for Afghanistan, and essential reforms to improve the banking sector are now being implemented. A final agreement is possible before the Bonn Conference in December and will be an important milestone for the long-term health of the Afghan economy.

As Minister Rassoul and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General highlighted, we have two major international events that will consolidate progress already made and set the context for next year. The Istanbul Conference on 2 November will be a key opportunity to enhance and expand regional cooperation. We hope that the region will use the opportunity to agree on a coherent approach, building on language of the London and Kabul conference communiqués on good-neighbourly relations. We look forward to the Conference, and thank the Turkish hosts and the Government of Afghanistan for their tireless work in its preparation.

Following Istanbul, the December Bonn Conference will send a clear signal of the Afghan Government's growing ownership and leadership on its path to self-sufficiency, and of the international community's long-term commitment to Afghanistan beyond the transition process.

On long-term engagement, we believe that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will have a vital role to play both during and beyond transition, and we therefore look forward to the forthcoming review of UNAMA's mandated activities and United Nations support in Afghanistan. We urge the review to focus on the post-2014 landscape and on how UNAMA and the United Nations can support the Afghan Government in bringing about the emergence of a strong, durable and self-sustaining Afghan State.

The death of Mr. Rabbani will not deflect us from our goals. Political aims cannot be achieved by violence and extremism. The course of reconciliation and greater political inclusion for all Afghan groups will continue. The Bonn Conference will help drive

efforts forward. I want to take this occasion to make clear our message to the Taliban that there is no military solution. Our commitment to Afghanistan's security and stability is enduring, and we will continue to support the Afghan National Security Forces and a strong Afghan State long after 2015. If the Taliban believe that peace can be achieved through dialogue, then now is the time to signal that belief, because the window of opportunity will not remain open forever.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): My delegation welcomes Foreign Minister Rassoul to this meeting and thanks him especially for his very important statement. I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura for his very comprehensive briefing.

Our intervention this morning will focus on three principal areas: security, political post-electoral development, and economic and regional cooperation.

Nigeria notes with deep concern the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, which to a large extent continues to distract the Government's commitment and initiatives in the full operationalization of the transition and the Kabul process. The high toll in civilian casualties has reached an alarming proportion, and this serious challenge must be met with decisive action through the collaborative efforts of the international community.

We condemn in the strongest possible terms the senseless and meaningless terrorist attack last week in Kabul that resulted in deaths and injuries. In the same vein, the targeted assassination of former Afghan President and Chairman of the High Peace Council Rabbani, who had dedicated his life to campaigning assiduously for a sustained peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan, was indeed a huge blow to the peace process. This great loss and tragic incident must not dampen our hopes for a new Afghanistan.

Nigeria reiterates its commitment to supporting the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to advance the peace and reconciliation process, and indeed supports the efforts of the international community in combating terrorism. We should ensure that those responsible for committing acts of terrorism are never allowed to truncate the cause of peace, unity and freedom in a new Afghanistan.

It is in this regard that we welcome the formalization of the agreement to increase the size of

the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which will enable it to effectively respond to the growing security threat in the country. In addition, the formal transition of security responsibility to the ANSF in some critical areas is a welcome development. The assumption of increasing control by the ANSF over Afghan security would strengthen the country's independence and development towards long-term stability. We hope that this approach will reinforce the capacity of the Afghan forces to maintain security. Suffice it to say that the transition of the first set of districts and provinces to full Afghan security control earlier in the year continues to face significant obstacles, especially in the area of border protection.

It is gratifying to note that Afghanistan continues to record positive progress in its reconciliation and integration efforts, despite the cynical trend of events in the country. Nigeria reiterates its support for this process to be Afghan-driven in order to forge the national unity envisaged within the framework of the peace process. That process must be further consolidated by Afghanistan's democratic institutions by way of resolving the legislative impasse created by the announcement of some changes in the membership of the National Assembly. While we support the need for Afghans themselves to reach a negotiated political solution to their problems, the reference point must remain the application of the rule of law in accordance with the Constitution. Other democratic and constitutionally mandated institutions, including the electoral bodies, must adhere to this ground rule. In that regard, the pivotal role of women in the peace process must not be undermined.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continues to play an active role in promoting constructive dialogue among all stakeholders, as well as to assist the Government in its framework for sustainable peace. We encourage all the parties to renew their commitment to the consolidation of the democratic peace process for the attainment of lasting peace and security.

On economic development, we note the Secretary-General's observation that the sustainability of the achievements recorded in Afghanistan will depend on the success in strengthening institutions, in particular at the sub-national level, the creation of jobs and economic opportunities, and on access to and delivery of basic justice. Moreover, the Government will need long-term international support and private

sector investment to boost revenue generation and all its ramifications. We therefore continue to support the channelling of funds and other forms of assistance through the Afghan budget system for greater coherence and efficiency.

We welcome the increasing cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours. Their joint efforts to combat organized crime, including drug and human trafficking and arms smuggling, will not only facilitate the implementation of the Government's national priority programme, but also strengthen regional security. We believe that the Istanbul Conference of 2 November, which has been referred to in various statements, will provide yet another important platform to focus on prioritizing areas for regional cooperation.

We extend our appreciation and support to Special Representative of the Secretary-General De Mistura for his exceptional leadership, and to the staff of UNAMA and all United Nations personnel for their renewed commitment towards the sustainability of a democratic Afghanistan.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): We welcome the presence at today's meeting of His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. We listened with great interest to his remarks today.

I thank the Secretary-General for his valuable report (S/2011/590), and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura, for his informative briefing.

We are deeply concerned about the security situation in Afghanistan, especially regarding the continually increasing loss of civilian lives due to overall intensified fighting. We reiterate our condemnation, in the strongest possible terms, of attacks against schools and mosques, and we repeat that such heinous attacks, which have taken the lives of children and innocent civilians, are simply not acceptable.

Furthermore, we condemn the targeted assassination of high-ranking Government officials and prominent political and religious leaders. We also strongly condemn the recent tragic killing of the Chair of the High Peace Council, Mr. Rabbani, and a number of his colleagues. We express our condolences to the Afghan Government and all Afghan people.

Despite all these difficulties, we sincerely hope that Afghanistan is now on the right path towards sustainable Afghan-led reconstruction of governance and of its economy, accompanied by the transition of responsibility over security in the country.

We welcome the formal start, on 17 July, of the transfer of security responsibilities to Afghan authorities. The increase of Afghan National Police forces and Afghan National Army will certainly and considerably facilitate this essential process, which should, in the end, bring greater security and stability, and, consequently, opportunities for the country's development.

In that regard, we noted positively the recent review conference organized by the Afghan Government and welcome its conclusion that it is necessary to include governance and development strategies in transition areas. It is therefore important that negotiation between the Afghan Government and the International Monetary Fund soon result in an agreement, which will protect the interests of the Afghan people and facilitate the much-needed reconstruction of the country. Furthermore, in the context of post-conflict reconstruction, we strongly support the mine clearance and demining programmes, and welcome the recent results obtained in the field.

We have always strongly supported the process of reconciliation in Afghanistan and, in that context, the role of the High Peace Council. We believe that there is no alternative to the national reconciliation process. We commend UNAMA for the continuous assistance it provides to the High Peace Council through its Salaam Support Group.

We welcome the increase of reintegrated persons who have joined the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme, and express our hope that this trend will continue in the future, with even greater success.

Dialogue and reconciliation must be the priority for all parties in Afghanistan for the sake of Afghan children and their hopes for a better future, generations of whom have already borne the enormous burden of war. We are also very concerned about the findings of the research conducted by UNAMA regarding child recruitment by anti-Government elements for military and suicide attacks. We call upon all parties to respect the rights of the child and expect the action plan to

tackle perpetrators to be implemented by the authorities as a matter of the highest priority.

We also encourage UNAMA to continue to observe detention facilities across Afghanistan and to monitor and investigate arbitrary detention, ill treatment and fair trial guarantees.

We reiterate our strong support for cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours, and we encourage all countries to continue strengthening it in the spirit of friendly relations.

The Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Commission for Reconciliation and Peace certainly represents a good example of how to improve the reconciliation process in Afghanistan, bearing in mind the economic, political and trade issues that are being improved with neighbours.

We look forward to the conferences on Afghanistan, to be held in November and December in Istanbul and Bonn, respectively. We thank the Turkish and German Governments for their efforts and for the strong support they have given to Afghanistan's peace and prosperity.

With regard to UNAMA's security issues, we welcome the continuation of the process to upgrade the physical security of its field offices.

In conclusion, we would like to thank all the UNAMA and other United Nations staff for their dedicated work and for delivering on their mandates in a very difficult environment.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, and to thank him for his statement. I should also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his precise analysis and description of the situation in Afghanistan and the prospects for the transition process. More than a mere bureaucratic report, Mr. de Mistura's briefing was the testimony of someone who lives and works side by side with the people and Government of Afghanistan in restoring peace. UNAMA's substantial contribution to the stabilization and democratization processes and its efforts to work in coordination with the Government to lay the foundation for sustainable

peace and development in Afghanistan deserve our full acknowledgment.

Colombia deeply regrets the recent incidents and loss of lives, in particular the assassination of the Chairman of the High Peace Council, Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, who will be deeply missed by the international community. We express our profound condolences. As the Secretary-General has noted, such attacks may be part of an intimidation campaign to weaken the reconstruction and reconciliation dialogue. I therefore welcome the statement made today by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in spite of this and other violent acts, the reconciliation process will continue.

It is crucial to strengthen relations with local authorities and community leaders in order to facilitate a process of inclusive dialogue that will lead to reconciliation with all segments of the population. It is also essential not to waiver in our efforts to create a climate conducive to ensuring that the transfer of security sector responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces takes place in keeping with the agreed timetable, and that the Afghan forces will be able to assume that leadership by 2014. On that point, the efforts of the International Security Assistance Force and the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan will make a valuable contribution to enhancing the capacity and professionalism of the Afghan National Security Forces.

We underscore the timeliness of regional joint initiatives in order to combat the various dimensions of the global drug problem affecting Afghanistan and the region. The Secretary-General noted that while the eradication of poppy cultivation has increased by some 65 per cent as compared with 2010, the country remains the main source of opium and heroin. We agree with the Secretary-General that, given the global nature of the drug problem, it must be addressed in all its aspects based on common but differentiated responsibilities, with the contribution of the entire international community.

Afghanistan is facing a number of problems that could threaten the sustainability of the gains achieved so far. Violence remains a principal factor that has affected progress and led to an increased need for humanitarian assistance and increased numbers of civilian deaths and internally displaced persons. We call on all parties to the conflict to fulfil their

obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law and to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of civilians.

We agree with the Secretary-General with regard to the need to broaden the scope of the transitional process. While security is essential to restoring the rule of law, the exercise of fundamental freedoms and laying the foundation for economic progress, governance and rule of law are fundamental elements to guarantee a sustainable and definitive transition.

The international medium- and long-term commitment to Afghanistan must include aspects such as strengthened institutions, increased employment and economic opportunity and access to justice. Sustainable transition requires State structures able to guarantee governance and economic stability at all levels. That must be the aim of the international cooperation efforts in Afghanistan.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I am pleased to welcome Mr. Zalmai Rassoul and I would like to thank him for his statement. I thank Special Representative Staffan de Mistura for his briefing and for his extraordinary leadership at the helm of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

I wish to express Brazil's condolences to the Afghan Government and people for the brutal assassination of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani, Chairman of the High Peace Council. His loss is a loss to the peace process as a whole. Afghans should not feel discouraged, however. They must find the strength in themselves and in the support of the international community to redouble efforts to promote reconciliation.

Despite the difficulties, the transition process towards Afghan security responsibility must continue to advance. But let us not forget that the military and political timetables must coincide. Until now, military developments have outpaced progress in national reconciliation. We expect all sectors of Afghan society to continue to seek constructive dialogue.

Recent security incidents demonstrate that, unfortunately, the tide of violence is not receding in Afghanistan. On the contrary, rates of civilian deaths and injuries have risen. Brazil reiterates the need for all concerned to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and to abandon the use of tactics that indiscriminately target civilians.

In our high-level meeting on preventive diplomacy this past week (see S/PV.6621), many of us reaffirmed the need to address the link between poverty and violence. Socio-economic development must be central to our strategy for peace in Afghanistan. The peace process will stand a better chance of being embraced by all Afghans when they are able to realize that stability brings concrete improvements to their lives. In that sense, international support must fully abide by the principles of Afghan leadership and ownership.

As we approach the end of 2011, it is becoming clearer that dialogue is the path to a solution for the conflict in Afghanistan. This path must be strengthened by all of the means at our disposal. We hope that the international community will show strong support for Afghanistan during the Istanbul and the Bonn conferences. We welcome the focus of the Bonn Conference on the civilian aspects of the transition, including mediation, coordination of assistance and long-term international support to Afghanistan and the reconciliation process. Brazil will actively participate in the Conference.

At the same time, the regional dimension of the Istanbul Conference is particularly important to the future of Afghanistan. Global solutions to the conflict will have greater legitimacy and efficacy if underpinned by the concerns, perspectives and support of the countries of the region.

Brazil renews its commitment to working together with the Afghan people and Government towards a future of peace and prosperity.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. De Mistura for his briefing on the situation in Afghanistan and Mr. Rassoul for his statement. I endorse the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

We were obviously shocked and saddened by the attack that took the life of the former Afghan President and Chair of the High Peace Council, Mr. Rabbani. The terrorists are attempting to divert us from our goal; they must fail. The international community must rally around the message of unity and determination, as the Council did on 21 September and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will continue to do in Kabul. Our aim remains to support the Afghan Government on its road to fully restored

sovereignty in the framework of a consistent and determined transition process.

As to France, the President of the Republic announced our intention to reduce and redeploy our contingent in cooperation with our allies and the Afghan authorities. On the other hand, in parallel and in the same context, the civil component of our effort will gradually grow. France's engagement will not end in 2014, but it will have been changed by a friendship and cooperation agreement between France and Afghanistan to be signed this autumn.

These major changes are taking place in a difficult security context, as recalled by the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/590). The insurgents have demonstrated their capacity to carry out complex attacks at the very heart of Kabul. The number of civilian victims has increased as compared to the past year thanks to the Taliban who no longer hesitate to kill in hospitals and in mosques. That being the case, the Afghan Security Forces are growing more powerful and have demonstrated their resolve to fight. We need to continue to focus on protecting civilians within the framework of the International Security Assistance Force. It is just as important to be able to demonstrate that we are fighting on behalf of values that preclude any practices that undermine human dignity.

The stabilization of Afghanistan entails its integration into a regional dynamic based on new rules. The Conference on the New Silk Road Initiative was an opportunity to reaffirm the importance for Afghanistan to once again become the centre of exchange that it was in the past. With regard to the ongoing military commitment and a vision for the economy, there is a need to think deeply about the regional parameters for security. We welcome the upcoming Conferences in Istanbul in November and in Bonn on 5 December, which will help us to move forward on all of those issues.

At the Kabul Conference last year, the goal of Afghanization was set forth with conditions — better management of public finances, reducing corruption, and the performance of the budget. The international community cannot continue to effectively carry out its commitment if those conditions are not met and agreement is not reached between the country's authorities and the International Monetary Fund to address the Kabul Bank crisis.

Moreover, Afghanistan cannot allow the institutional crisis that has been taking place since the last legislative elections to continue. We note the announcement by the Independent Election Commission to change the composition of the lower chamber. We call on all Afghan institutions to work in line with their respective purviews, in the framework set out in the Constitution and the principle of the separation of powers. That episode makes it all the more necessary to carry out genuine electoral reform with the support of the United Nations.

We are convinced that the United Nations in general, and UNAMA in particular, will have a major role to play in Afghanistan in coming years. Its presence and its mandates will change based on the transition. We look forward to the results of the strategic review requested of the Secretary-General in resolution 1974 (2011).

We would like to conclude by commending the efforts of Special Representative Staffan de Mistura, who has led UNAMA with great skill and the vision necessary to refocus its actions and help it through dramatic moments. I also pay tribute to the personnel of UNAMA, who at the request of the Security Council and UNAMA are working in challenging and dangerous conditions in favour of the stabilization, security and development of Afghanistan.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): We would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan Staffan de Mistura for introducing the Secretary-General's report on that country (S/2011/590). South Africa also welcomes and appreciates the participation at this debate of Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to extend our sincere condolences to the Afghan Government and people following the assassination of Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, former President of Afghanistan and Chair of the High Peace Council. We join other members of the Council in condemning that assassination in the strongest possible terms — a malicious attack that is an unfortunate setback to efforts aimed at political reconciliation.

We note that the report of the Secretary-General paints a bleak picture, as violence has increased over the past year. Although Afghanistan has begun its journey to peace and stability, a number of challenges remain. Those challenges, in our view, are not

insurmountable. With the committed assistance of the international community, Afghanistan can finally chart its own path through its own leadership in a process that is Afghan-led and Afghan-owned.

On the political front, South Africa welcomes the relatively positive developments that have taken place over the past few months, especially the announcement of the swearing in of the nine new members of the lower house of the Afghan National Assembly. That, in our view, lays the foundation for the stabilization of the political process in Afghanistan. We are pleased to note that the Afghan Government has committed itself to resolving all outstanding issues within a legal and political framework. South Africa continues to welcome efforts to strengthen political outreach activities. Political dialogue and reconciliation are critical for the Afghan people and their Government.

The situation of children, youth and women should continue to receive the highest attention during this transition. South Africa commends the advocacy work led by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) within civil society aimed at involving women in decision-making structures. Our view is that women have a critical role to play in the political, economic and social development of the country.

As we have stated previously, our delegation continues to believe that there is an inextricable link between development and security in Afghanistan. We are pleased that the Afghan Government continues with its commitment to address the socio-economic situation facing the country. In that context, we encourage the Government to increase its efforts aimed at improving its institutional capacity to offer viable alternatives to poppy cultivation and narcotics.

National ownership and leadership remain crucial to political security and socio-economic progress in Afghanistan. The international community should continue its supportive role in the country's transition from conflict to stability and prosperity. South Africa therefore continues to support the presence and the role of UNAMA in Afghanistan.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Like others, I too wish to welcome Minister Rassoul to our meeting today and to thank him for his very important statement. I would like to say a special word of thanks to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura for his very comprehensive and, as

usual, very lucid briefing. Let me also once again commend him, his staff and his team for their constant efforts and their perseverance in the midst of a very difficult, dangerous and complex situation.

The statement by Minister Rassoul, the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/590) and the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General have covered the essential aspects of the situation in Afghanistan. Portugal naturally associates itself with the statement that will be delivered later by the observer of the European Union.

This summer has indeed been a difficult season in Afghanistan. One of the most disturbing aspects of this difficult summer — as the Special Representative underlined — has been the political assassinations targeting notable figures at the national, regional and Government levels, of which Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, former President of Afghanistan and Chair of the High Peace Council, is the latest victim. Let me reiterate my country's utter condemnation of that murder and extend our condolences, through the Foreign Minister, to the Government and the people of Afghanistan.

Those assassinations are one more effort to distract us and the Afghan people from what is happening on the ground — the gradual normalization of the country and, ultimately, the defeat of the enemies of a democratic Afghanistan. As the Minister has said, however, we are confident that the reconciliation process will continue and achieve peace in Afghanistan.

With regard to transition, we note that regions undergoing that process face, as the Secretary-General mentioned, resilient insurgency. It is not surprising that those areas are particularly targeted by insurgents, who know that the Afghan and international efforts against them will be judged by how the transition evolves. It is also natural for national institutions at the security and public service levels to show themselves in autonomous action before the Afghan people and to deliver. In that regard, allow me to quote once more the Secretary-General's report, in saying that what is needed is

"effective governance and delivery of services to the population. The momentum behind the security transition should not be at the expense of, or outstrip, efforts to invest in governance and development processes". (S/2011/590, para. 59)

We also take positive note of the separation of the sanctions regimes regarding Al-Qaida and the Taliban and the de-listing of a number of individuals. We believe it was a useful measure towards dialogue and national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

The High Peace Council and the Salaam Support Group, in which the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) plays an important assistance role, are an unequivocally valuable tool for fostering dialogue and outreach inside and outside Afghanistan. Their relevance has only been reinforced by the recent attacks on its President. We are sure that the Special Representative will pursue his engagement of the High Peace Council leadership, despite the latest events.

At a regional level, the initiatives of Afghanistan and its neighbours are noteworthy. Once more integrated within its region and closer to its immediate neighbours than ever before, Afghanistan is recovering its place in the world and widening the horizons of countless Afghans. The opportunity for business, connectivity, investment and regional economic cooperation will, I am sure, strengthen the country's independence and institutions and improve the lot of ordinary Afghans.

Civilian casualties have been increasing in numbers, notably due to suicide attacks cruelly designed and undertaken against civilian targets, such as hospitals and mosques. Those are, by any account, crimes whose victims require justice and whose perpetrators renew, at every occasion, their lack of legitimacy to represent Afghans or Afghanistan.

Moreover, the use of children as soldiers and as deliverers of weapons and explosive devices by anti-Government forces is particularly heinous. That practice, perhaps before any other, must be stopped, and we welcome the efforts of the Afghan Government regarding the recruitment and use of children by its security forces. We hope that further progress can be achieved within a short time frame.

The protection of civilians needs greater attention as the numbers of their victims rise. That is a task, I believe, that is too important and too essential for the national reconciliation of Afghanistan to be left without the strong participation, indeed ownership, of Afghan institutions. Providing relief, care and compensation to civilian victims is possible and feasible within Afghan means, legislation and tradition.

Portugal follows with the utmost attention the situation of Afghan women, and wholeheartedly supports the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and of UNAMA to promote and protect the human rights of women and in advocating and monitoring implementation of the Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women, as well as in promoting the political participation of women in peace and reconciliation processes.

I would also like to mention UNAMA's assistance to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. I believe that the mainstreaming of human rights into the justice system, and the independent monitoring thereof, will surely reinforce the rule of law and the legitimacy of the institutions.

I have a couple of words regarding the humanitarian situation and the counter-narcotics efforts. Food assistance to hundreds of thousands in Afghanistan will be needed in the coming months. That situation, beyond its evident humanitarian dimension, is an emerging threat to the security situation as well, as it may very well help in reversing the progress achieved in counter-insurgency.

As regards the growing opium production, in itself a very worrying development beyond its connection to terrorism, Portugal encourages the Government to pursue its national counter-drugs policy, but also to seek regional solutions, including by sharing information, material and strategies, to the cross-border issues raised by drug trafficking and its link to other forms of international crime.

I conclude by sharing the Secretary-General's view of the requirements for a successful transition: the recognition that development, governance and the rule of law are crucial; the need for capturing momentum and accelerating sustainable development activities; assessing operational and support costs for development projects; and long-term international support and private sector investment.

The coming Istanbul and Bonn conferences will allow us to start discussing such decisive issues very soon. They will be the stepping stones towards winning the battle of peace, stability and economic and social development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I wish to welcome Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Mr. Rassoul for his presence at this

meeting, and I thank him for his statement. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mr. De Mistura for his briefing.

Through the efforts of the Afghan Government and people, progress has been made in the Afghan peace and reconstruction process. The results are encouraging. However, challenges also lie ahead. The security situation in Afghanistan remains unstable. Terrorist attacks occur from time to time. Economic development is slow. Comprehensive stability and reconstruction will be a long process. It requires the unremitting efforts of the Afghan Government and people. It also needs the continued support and assistance of the international community. In that regard, I would like to underscore the following five points.

First, China is seriously concerned about the worsening security situation and the increasing number of civilian casualties. We hope that, in the transfer of security responsibilities to the Afghan Government, the parties concerned will earnestly assume the responsibilities to help Afghanistan strengthen its security capacity-building in order to ensure a peaceful and stable transition.

Secondly, China supports Afghanistan in its continued efforts to push through the Kabul process. In order to achieve Afghan peace, stability and development, there is a need to fully respect its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity so as to genuinely achieve an Afghanistan run by Afghans.

Thirdly, China supports the peace and reintegration programme led by the Afghan Government. In China, we express our shock and condolences at the tragic death of former President of Afghanistan Professor Rabbani following the attack on him and condemn the attack. China fully respects the Afghan Government and people in their choice of their own accord and hopes to see progress in its peace and reintegration programme.

Fourthly, the international community must support Afghanistan in its comprehensive economic and social development. Parties need to deliver and meet their commitments to assist Afghanistan. The priorities identified by Afghan themselves in the context of the Afghan National Development Strategy must also be respected and implemented. The relevant initiatives for Afghan economic reconstruction will be

seriously considered. We believe that we need to fully heed the views of the Afghan Government and people and to respect their sovereignty and ownership. Regional countries must become involved and their views be fully taken into account. The relevant initiatives need to be implemented on the basis of full consultations and consensus among the parties.

Fifthly, China appreciates the active efforts of the United Nations to push through the Afghan peace and reconstruction process. China supports the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in its continued leading role in coordinating aid to support the Afghan peace and reconstruction. We hope that UNAMA will strengthen its communication, coordination and cooperation with the Afghan Government.

As a friendly neighbour of Afghanistan, China is consistently committed to good-neighbourliness and friendship between the two countries. China attaches importance to and actively participates in the Afghan reconstruction process. China will continue to provide assistance to Afghanistan within its capabilities, and will work with the international community to contribute to an early achievement of peace, stability and development in Afghanistan.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for scheduling today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan. I welcome His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, to the Council and thank him for his statement. We are grateful for the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/590) and appreciate the briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura.

We are deeply concerned that the overall security environment in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate. The latest Secretary-General's report notes that the average monthly number of security incidents is up 39 per cent as compared to the same period in 2010. While the process of transition of security responsibilities to the Afghan National Security Forces has been ongoing since July 2011, it is, indeed, worrisome that there has been no let-up in terrorist violence.

The Taliban has opted for attacking high-security targets, assassinations and launching complex suicide attacks in urban centres, including Kabul. Important political figures and Government officials have been

killed in the recent past, including Ahmad Wali Karzai, Chair of the Kandahar Provincial Council, and Ghulam Haydar Hamidi, the Mayor of Kandahar. The Intercontinental Hotel, the British Council and the United States Embassy in Kabul have also been targeted.

We unreservedly condemn last week's assassination of Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, Chair of the High Peace Council and former President of Afghanistan. Tragically, the forces of terror and hatred have silenced yet another powerful voice of reason and peace in Afghanistan.

As we have repeatedly stressed in the Security Council, such attacks point to a dangerous osmosis of ideologies, ambitions, training and operations among the syndicate of terrorism in the region, with suicide terrorism as its main technique and targets not limited to Afghanistan. The resilience of insurgents and their ability to target areas otherwise considered safe and secure is a grim reminder that the security gains are still tenuous.

For peace, stability and security in Afghanistan, it is imperative that the ongoing transition be linked to the realities on the ground, rather than rigid timetables. In its hurry to withdraw from a combat role in Afghanistan, the international community will only ignore that at its own peril.

The latest report (S/2011/590) of the Secretary-General underscores that, for the success of the transition, it is important that the Afghan National Security Forces continue to demonstrate enhanced independent capability and professionalism to assume an increasing level of responsibility and accountability. We support the further strengthening of the Afghan National Security Forces, which must go hand in hand with the enhancement of their capabilities and adequate enablers. It is important that the transition be Afghan-owned and planned and implemented in a systematic manner. It must also ensure the protection and promotion of the human rights of all Afghans.

For the security and stabilization of Afghanistan, it is important to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism, which includes elements of the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups operating within and outside Afghanistan's borders. These groups are ideologically and operationally fused, and their bonds have strengthened over the years. It will not be possible to

consolidate the gains on the security front unless the international community is able to firmly deal with safe havens for terrorist groups outside Afghanistan's borders.

We fully support an Afghan-led, inclusive and transparent process of reconciliation, adhering to the red lines enunciated by the Afghan Government in the Kabul and London communiqués. As we have stressed earlier, that must be accompanied by an inclusive political process and intra-Afghan dialogue and include a renunciation of violence, the cutting of ties to terrorist groups and respect for the Afghan Constitutions, with its protections for human rights, including the rights of women.

Afghan ownership and leadership are also vital to development and reconstruction in Afghanistan. That also implies greater coherence, coordination and further streamlining of the international community's development-related efforts, including aligning assistance with Afghan national priorities and increasingly working through Afghan institutions. We are happy to note efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in that regard.

With the onset of the drawdown of foreign security forces and the transition process, it is all the more important for the international community — especially the countries of the region — to remain committed in this crucial phase, when Afghan national institutions are still being developed and consolidated.

It is also important that Afghanistan's growth strategy be built upon the country's comparative advantage of abundant natural resources and its strategic geographical location. Those will have to be the building blocks of our vision for Afghanistan as a hub linking Central and South Asia through pipelines, trade and transit routes for the common good of the people of our region and the world. We support the New Silk Road Initiative, which is an important step in that direction.

India remains committed to partnering with the government and people of Afghanistan in the building of a peaceful, stable, democratic and pluralistic nation. India's assistance programme is spread across Afghanistan, spanning almost the entire gamut of economic and social development activities. We are undertaking reconstruction and development activities in Afghanistan with a total bilateral assistance

commitment of approximately \$2 billion. We have placed special emphasis on capacity building and human resource development, which, in our opinion, are the building blocks for a robust and self-reliant economy.

Indian companies have evinced interest in the exploitation of Afghanistan's iron ore reserves. India is also participating in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline project. Those are projects that call for large investment. We express our resolve to cooperate with Afghanistan on plans involving regional integration for the mutual benefit of all stakeholders.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, of which Afghanistan is a full member, is an important vehicle for regional economic cooperation within the South Asia region. We have always considered Afghanistan as a South Asian country with natural complementarities and synergies with other countries of South Asia, and one that is uniquely placed to build bridges even beyond it. India's rapidly growing economy and its large market make it a natural destination for Afghan exports. Similarly, India can be a cost-effective and efficient source of Afghan imports.

As the security transition moves forward, Afghanistan needs the long-term commitment and support of the international community. We look forward to the forthcoming Istanbul and Bonn Conferences and the comprehensive review of UNAMA's mandated activities and United Nations support in Afghanistan by the end of this year. We hope that this will contribute to efforts towards lasting peace and the stability, economic sustainability and regional integration of Afghanistan in the years ahead.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Lebanon.

I would like to begin by joining my colleagues in thanking Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), for his briefing and his efforts in that country. I should also like once again to welcome Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, as well as to thank him for his statement and his presence here. I should now like to make a few comments.

With the beginning of the gradual handover of responsibility for security to Afghan authorities, the difficult security situation continues to be a source of major concern for Afghans as well as for the international community. Undoubtedly, the resolution adopted to increase the number and preparedness of national military forces will contribute to improving the security situation in the country.

In the light of the increasing number of civilian losses and injuries, we reiterate our call on all parties to abide scrupulously with the provisions of international humanitarian law and to do everything possible to protect innocent persons from violence, as well as mosques and hospitals, which have not been spared from attack in recent months.

Lebanon condemns the assassination of Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, former President and Chair of the High Peace Council (HPC), which was intended to undermine the efforts made by the Council to achieve dialogue and reconciliation among all components of Afghan society. We extend our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Afghanistan, including the family of the deceased.

In that context, we call for moving ahead with the policy of dialogue, reconciliation and confidence-building as the only alternative to violence, with a view to achieving the desired peace.

The sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) will have an important role to play in ensuring the success of the HPC in a matter that is of no less importance than the political and security situation. We call for decisive efforts to improve the human rights situation in Afghanistan, particularly by enforcing the law prohibiting violence against women and protecting women from injustice, coercion and discrimination, as our Organization demands. Although the efforts of UNAMA have yet to stem the tide of violence and injustice against women, they have helped to mitigate it. In that regard, we welcome UNAMA's focus on situations of arbitrary detention and detainee abuse and on guaranteeing fair trials, which are prerequisites for good governance and the rule of law.

Perhaps the most horrendous situation described in the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/590) is the ongoing recruitment of children by the various parties to the conflict for military and even sexual purposes. We call for zero tolerance for that phenomenon and due

punishment for those responsible, with the aim of preventing such abuse.

I also recall the importance of moving ahead with the implementation of the provisions of the Kabul process, and look forward to agreement on the International Monetary Fund country programme, the absence of which would adversely affect the reconstruction and socio-economic development of Afghanistan.

At the regional and international levels, we welcome the efforts of Afghanistan's neighbouring States to consolidate security and economic cooperation, particularly with respect to border control and the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism. The stability and prosperity of Afghanistan will have an impact on the region, and we look forward to the convening of the Istanbul and Bonn Conferences in the coming months. They represent the international community's reaffirmation of its commitment to supporting Afghanistan.

In conclusion, we reiterate our appreciation for the efforts of the international community in general, and the United Nations in particular, in all fields. The Organization is working with courage and resolve in difficult security conditions for a better future for Afghanistan, a country rich in civilization, potential and yearning for peace and progress.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rishchynski (Canada): Let me begin by thanking Foreign Minister Rassoul for his presence today with us and for his statement to the Security Council this morning. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, for his briefing today and for the continued good work being done by him and his team in Afghanistan.

As we near the end of 2011, representatives from the Afghan Government, its neighbouring countries and all their international partners will take part in a series of regional and international meetings that will culminate with the Bonn Conference on 5 December. These meetings will allow us to work together towards achieving tangible results for the transition of responsibilities for governance and security to the Afghan government. The new Bonn Conference will

also be an opportunity to strengthen our common vision of a better-governed and more stable Afghanistan that will never again serve as a refuge for terrorists.

A sustainable transition of responsibilities for governance and security to the Afghan Government is central to this vision and will remain at the forefront of our efforts. With this objective in mind, we need to rely strongly on the progress that has been made since 2001 in order to continue to support Afghan efforts towards political reconciliation, increased regional cooperation, and strong and more autonomous Afghan institutions that are able to provide essential services to the people of Afghanistan.

Through its renewed engagement in Afghanistan, Canada maintains its fundamental objective of contributing to the country's reconstruction as a complement to the priorities identified by the Afghan Government and the international community in the context of the Kabul process in 2010. In this regard, we are satisfied with the work that the standing committees of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board accomplished over the summer, and look forward to the Board meeting scheduled to take place next month. Canada's new engagement until 2014 will build on our significant experience and investments in Afghanistan to date, and sustain progress in key areas that are essential to a better future, such as the future of Afghan children and youth, security, the rule of law and respect for human rights, regional diplomacy and the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Children and youth are the country's future. Using effective and accountable development assistance, Canada will continue to invest in education and health, building on our significant contribution to date in these areas. Canada will continue to support the Afghan Government in improving access to quality primary and secondary education, especially for girls and young women. We will also continue working on the transparency and accountability of the Afghan national educational sector to help foster a secure learning environment for all children. Today, over 2.2 million Afghan girls go to school. This is a dramatic increase over the number in 2001, when girls were forbidden to attend school. Moreover, 29 per cent of the 158,000 teachers in Afghanistan are women, a significant increase to the 21,000 there were in 2002. In the health sector, Canada will help the Afghan

Government in its work to improve maternal, newborn and child health.

Canada is also renewing its commitment to the Afghan Government and its international partners to supporting the Kabul process and meet the objectives of the national priority programmes in terms of education, health and human rights, especially for Afghan women and girls. Particular attention must be paid to the rights of Afghan women in particular. They are at the forefront of Canada's development efforts in Afghanistan. Canada has committed to providing peace and security to all through its Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

(spoke in French)

The violent incidents that took place over the summer, including a number of political assassinations and attacks on civilian targets, as well as the recent attacks on the International Security Assistance Force, the American embassy and Afghan security in Kabul, remind us of the importance of tirelessly continuing our efforts to improve the security situation in Afghanistan. To that end, it is essential that we increase the capacities of the Afghan National Security Forces, which will assume responsibility for security in Afghanistan in 2014.

The Afghan forces will soon have reached the required number of personnel under the objectives of the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan. The continued development of professional skills and institutional capabilities will therefore be at the forefront of the continued mission until 2014. By contributing to the efforts of the NATO Training Mission Afghanistan, Canada will help to implement a security force with the discipline, professionalism and efficiency required to ensure the country's stability and to promote peace and economic development for the population.

Moreover, the credibility and professionalism of the Afghan National Police are essential to the country's stability, to the people's and communities' sense of security, and to strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan and respect for human rights. Canada will therefore support the training of the Afghan National Security Forces by providing up to 950 instructors and support staff to the NATO Training Mission for the next three years. In addition, the deployment of 45 police officers who will help train

members of the Afghan National Police will contribute to these same objectives. It is essential that the continued support of Canada and the international community to Afghan transition be based on the implementation of credible reforms by the Afghan Government that will strengthen the confidence of donors, investors and the Afghan people.

Canada is pleased that the transition of responsibilities for governance and security is already well under way in a number of districts in Afghanistan. According to the joint assessment of the Afghan Government and the NATO mission, the first tranche of Afghan districts studied have now successfully assumed responsibility for their governance and for their security.

That said, stability in Afghanistan cannot be achieved by military force alone. We strongly condemn the assassination of former President Burhanuddin Rabbani, head of the Afghanistan High Peace Council. That cowardly and brutal act must not slow the efforts of the Afghan people towards reconciliation. The political reconciliation efforts led by Afghans must include dialogue with all stakeholders in society, including women and vulnerable persons.

Canada supports the efforts being made by Afghanistan to establish a dialogue with those who have renounced violence, respect the Constitution, and have no ties with Al-Qaida or other terrorist groups.

(speaks in English)

It is also by relying on lessons learned that Afghanistan can continue its progress towards a transparent democracy that listens to its people. In this regard, we have noted the great efforts made by the Afghan Government and all parliamentarians to resolve the parliamentary election deadlock, and we hope that these recent developments will finally allow Parliament to fully assume its role in the governance of the Afghan State. We encourage the Afghan Government, the Parliament and all stakeholders involved to continue their efforts to promote the electoral reforms needed to further develop democracy in Afghanistan. Strong, transparent and democratic institutions must be the basis for the reconstruction of a strong Afghan Government that is willing to serve all of its citizens.

Canada also believes that the prospect of a prosperous and stable Afghanistan is conceivable only

in the context of increased regional cooperation and integration. In this regard, Canada welcomes the New Silk Road initiative. We are very pleased by the prospect of helping to further develop this project, which will be an important element of the Bonn conference, and this in close collaboration with the Afghan Government and other international partners. Moreover, the Canadian Government will continue its efforts to promote dialogue and propose concrete measures to improve cooperation between countries in the region, especially Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Since 2001, substantial progress has been made in establishing and coordinating regional cooperation and planning mechanisms. Canada will continue to make the most of those gains to create a sustainable regional engagement strategy, notably by supporting efficient methods of managing the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan so as to promote legitimate trade. Regional diplomacy is one of our key priorities for engagement between now and 2014.

In conclusion, over the past 10 years Afghanistan and its partners have endeavoured to create an Afghanistan that is more democratic and more responsible for its own security and governance. Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, 157 members of the Canadian armed forces, as well as a diplomat, a journalist and three humanitarian workers from Canada, have all been killed. It is now up to all of us to maintain a strong engagement in Afghanistan in order to honour these sacrifices and those of the Afghan people, who have fought for peace in the country to ensure the sustainability of the progress made to date. I can assure the Council that Canada will not renounce its efforts to work with Afghanistan so that it can become a peaceful, secure and stable country that will never again serve as a refuge for terrorists.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): Let me begin by warmly greeting His Excellency Minister Ambassador Rassoul and Special Representative Staffan de Mistura. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/590) and the Special Representative for his briefing.

Before I go any further, I would like to express once again our sorrow and indignation at the assassination of Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, Chairman of the High Peace Council and former President of Afghanistan. We strongly condemn this heinous attack and offer our deepest sympathy and sincere

condolences to his family as well as to the people and the Government of Afghanistan. We also wish a speedy recovery to Mr. Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, Chief Executive of the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme.

It is incumbent upon Afghanistan and all of us to make sure that Mr. Rabbani's death will not have been in vain. Such attacks will not and cannot deter the Afghans and the international community from the pursuit of a peaceful, secure and democratic Afghanistan. It will certainly take time and dedicated efforts, but it is critical that credible progress be made towards reintegration and reconciliation. Thus we continue to strongly encourage Afghanistan's regional and international partners to continue to provide the necessary support to these efforts as requested by Afghanistan.

In addition to Mr. Rabbani's assassination, we have seen a recent spate of attacks by the insurgents against high-profile Afghan and international targets, as also enumerated in the Secretary-General's report. These attacks show that the security situation remains fragile. They are also an indication that recent developments, both in Afghanistan and in the region, increase the risks and challenges faced in the transition process that has recently been put into motion. A careful handling of these challenges will enable us to correctly identify the problems and find the necessary solutions. At the same time, we are convinced that the response of the Afghan military and police to the attacks have overall been effective. We consider this to be an important indicator of the fact that the training provided to the Afghan National security forces has begun to bear fruit. We should relentlessly continue our efforts in this area.

Our common objective in Afghanistan is to ensure that the Afghans have the means and capabilities to take charge of their future in a fully and meaningfully sovereign Afghan State. Afghanistan's neighbours and partners have important contributions to make and should continue their multidimensional efforts towards the solidification of Afghanistan's sovereign institutions.

Two important events relating to Afghanistan scheduled for later this year will provide opportunities to realize these goals. In December, we will meet in Bonn, at the gracious invitation of the German Government, to discuss and to define the long-term

engagement of the international community in Afghanistan. We have established 2014 as the target date for the transfer of security responsibilities to Afghanistan. However, as we have said numerous times, this is not the date for an exit and the end of our commitment to Afghanistan. After 2014, the international community will continue to be engaged comprehensively in Afghanistan, albeit in a transformed manner.

Before the Bonn meeting, on 2 November we will hold the Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan, on the theme "Security and Cooperation in the Heart of Asia". We hope that this meeting will be a milestone event in terms of charting the way forward for regional security cooperation.

Afghanistan today is at a critical juncture. It still faces significant security, political, economic and development challenges that transcend its borders. Those challenges cannot be addressed without the constructive support of Afghanistan's neighbours and regional partners. Efforts to meet such challenges are most effective when they are regionally owned and driven and pursued in a transparent and constructive manner. In that regard, the conference will be an essentially Afghan-led event with Turkish facilitation, but it will be critical for all participants to display full ownership, leadership and vision. Therefore, it is most encouraging that all the participants have told us that they are ready to show the necessary level of commitment.

There have been a number of initiatives so far that have been aimed at contributing to enhanced ties among the countries of the region. All of those initiatives have been pertinent to our joint endeavours. What we will try to do in Istanbul is not duplicate them but rather borrow their most useful aspects and try to build on them in order to achieve complementarity and added value. What we hope to achieve is the creation of a regional security and cooperation initiative, with a view to building greater confidence in the political, security and military fields and to strengthening cooperation in the economic, trade, environmental, cultural, energy and drug-control fields.

As always, we look forward to the strong support of the international community. We have already started the preparations and are working closely with Afghanistan, the United Nations and all other relevant countries and organizations. As we speak, our

representatives are travelling to Oslo for a preparatory meeting tomorrow, which will be followed by another one in Kabul on 15 October. My country remains steadfast in its commitment to, and support for, Afghanistan. In that vein, we will do our utmost so that the conference brings forth concrete deliverables that reflect Afghan goals and visions.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to acknowledge once more the dedicated and outstanding work that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is carrying out in fulfilment of its mandate in the face of very real and serious threats in Afghanistan. We are particularly grateful for the effective leadership shown by Special Representative Staffan de Mistura. We are also thankful to him for his valuable contributions. UNAMA's work in Afghanistan is critical now, and will remain so later on. As such, UNAMA has our full support.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to address the Security Council today. I also wish to thank Foreign Minister Rassoul and Special Representative De Mistura, for both their presence and their leadership. Australia continues to strongly support the work of the United Nations in Afghanistan and reaffirms its commitment to international efforts in support of Afghanistan.

A sustainable transition beyond 2014 requires genuine long-term engagement by the global community. As our Prime Minister has said on a number of occasions, we will remain engaged in Afghanistan through this decade at least. We see that continuing beyond. Following the conclusion of the transition in 2014, we will continue to provide civilian and development assistance, training and other defence cooperation.

Since the Council's debate on Afghanistan in March (see S/PV.6497), we have seen some worrying security developments, especially the increased momentum of the campaign of intimidation and targeted assassinations. Despite these serious concerns, our own assessment is that the fundamental trajectory on the security front is in the right direction, which is why we think that the insurgents are resorting to the sort of dramatic attacks we are seeing.

We have seen the successful beginning of the security transition in the first tranche of provinces and districts announced by President Karzai in July. Afghan forces themselves are performing increasingly well and effectively. We admire that.

The current campaign of terror is very worrying, but we must not allow it to derail the transition. We condemn the shocking murder Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, former Afghan President and Chair of the High Peace Council. We extend our deepest condolences to the people and Government of Afghanistan for his loss. But the process he embodied must continue. We reiterate our support to the Government of Afghanistan in its efforts to advance an inclusive peace and reconciliation process, as well as for the successful reintegration of former fighters into Afghan society.

It is encouraging to hear President Karzai's statement that the people and Government of Afghanistan remain undeterred. It is essential that the international community stand forthrightly with the Government and people of Afghanistan at this time.

A sustainable transition to Afghan security leadership will obviously depend on continued improvements in governance and development. In Uruzgan, where an Australian leads the provincial reconstruction team and where Australian security forces are concentrated, we are seeing progress; but that progress is fragile. We need to remain serious about protecting the gains that we have been made. More important, we need to focus much more intensively on building the capacity of the Afghan institutions in Uruzgan so that they can deliver concrete and consistent results on the ground.

We were pleased to participate in the ministerial meeting on Afghanistan held here in New York on 22 September, which provided a clear message of support for the New Silk Road concept. The vision behind that concept will be a critical element in accomplishing the security transition and to advancing regional economic development, which would underpin long-term security. A lot of work needs to be done to give that vision real substance, but we have to make the effort. It is encouraging to note that some infrastructure projects under the initiative have already begun. That work is absolutely essential to creating a strong network of trade and economic linkages across

the region and to providing the Afghan people with a long-term vision of economic prosperity.

Constructive engagement by Afghanistan's neighbours is critical to the prospect of a secure and prosperous Afghanistan and, in turn, for the Central Asian region itself. Australia welcomes the Istanbul conference to be hosted under Turkey's very constructive leadership and supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). A successful meeting in Istanbul will provide important and essential support for the Bonn meeting to be held in December. In Bonn, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan will need to demonstrate a robust and coordinated approach to building a stable, secure and prosperous country. Much more work is needed over coming months to ensure that we can achieve that result.

The role of United Nations agencies in coordinating development and humanitarian assistance is obviously becoming increasingly prominent as transition proceeds. Australia supports UNAMA's efforts to improve aid coherence and to encourage longer-term commitment to development. We ourselves are committed to working closely with donors and the Afghan Government. That includes support for capacity building in the mining and agriculture sectors, which we think will become a firm basis for much of the economy of Afghanistan in the near term.

Our own development assistance increased by 35 per cent in the past year. Afghanistan is now the fourth largest recipient of Australian aid. Our overall aid budget will increase to \$10 billion in the next couple of years. That support to Afghanistan will continue to increase.

Before I conclude, I would like to take a moment to remember those civilians who have been killed or wounded in Afghanistan since 2001. As the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/590) notes, we have seen an increase in civilian deaths and casualties, largely due to the continued use of improvised explosive devices and suicide attacks. Australia urges all parties involved in the armed conflict in Afghanistan to strengthen efforts to protect Afghan civilians.

In conclusion, I would like to express our appreciation for the strong leadership demonstrated by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Staffan de Mistura, and the dedication and sacrifice of UNAMA personnel working in

Afghanistan. We strongly supports all efforts to ensure that those who work in support of Afghanistan's future are able to do so with the necessary security to complete their difficult but indispensable tasks. We will continue to work with the Secretary-General and the General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee, to ensure that the necessary finances are made available for that.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Nishida (Japan): I would like to thank Mr. Zalmi Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, for his presence here today and for his statement. I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Staffan de Mistura for his very comprehensive and informative briefing. And I would like to take this opportunity to express Japan's gratitude to all the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) who have demonstrated their deep commitment to this very difficult mission.

At the outset, I would like to join my colleagues and previous speakers to express my sincere condolences for the demise of Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, Chair of Afghanistan's High Peace Council. Japan expresses its firm condemnation of such atrocious acts of terrorism.

As we have seen from various instances, the security situation in Afghanistan continues to be challenging. There have been targeted assassinations of high-ranking officials and suicide attacks, as described in the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/590). Security remains a priority that we have to tackle.

It is significant that the process of transferring security responsibility officially started in July. As I have stated on previous occasions, it is indispensable to peace and security in Afghanistan that a smooth transition be conducted during the drawdown of United States and other international forces, including by strengthening the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces. During this period, Japan continues to play its part towards achieving these goals through assistance to the Afghan National Police.

The transition and sustainable security are interlinked with the political process. The loss of Mr. Rabbani further underscores the importance of

continuing on the road of reconciliation and reintegration that he spearheaded. In light of this tragedy, it is important that all Afghanistan's leaders stand together in solidarity and demonstrate their resolve to work in support of peace, reconciliation and national unity. Now is the time for international partners to contribute to the advancement of the political process. Japan is determined to continue making our contribution to achieving irreversible progress in the Afghan-led reintegration programme.

The working group on reintegration of the International Contact Group met here last week, chaired by Ambassador Tanin and co-chaired by the United Kingdom and Japan. The group reaffirmed its commitment to the Afghan Government's programmes to reintegrate all those insurgents who are verifiably willing to renounce violence and terrorism and respect the Afghan Constitution, noting the need to provide support to their families in order to facilitate this.

To ensure long-term stability in Afghanistan, we have to accelerate regional cooperation among its neighbours. Japan will play an active role in strengthening regional economic cooperation to pave the way for integrating Afghanistan into the regional and global economy.

We appreciate the initiative of Germany, Afghanistan and the United States to co-chair the ministerial meeting on the New Silk Road last week. Japan supports the basic concept of the New Silk Road. Japan attaches importance to the following three points for advancing regional economic cooperation: first is to place emphasis on the southern route, which connects Afghanistan with the Indian Ocean; second is to promote the development of transport infrastructure, contributing to the growth of agriculture, which absorbs approximately 80 per cent of Afghanistan's labour population; and third is assistance to border control and customs procedures.

Japan believes that there is a firm commitment on the part of the international community to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. We expect to see further progress at the Istanbul Conference in November and the Bonn Conference in December. On the Afghan side, the country needs to strengthen its capacity for achieving real Afghan ownership and leadership.

Let me conclude by referring to the address by the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Yoshihiko Noda, at the General Assembly, in which he said:

"In order to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a breeding ground for terrorism, we will continue to confront the problem with strong resolve." (A/66/PV.19)

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the dedication of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. De Mistura, and once again reiterate our commitment to supporting the dedication and tireless efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Kydyrov (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, let me thank Staffan de Mistura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the friendly nation of Afghanistan, for their informative briefings on the situation in Afghanistan.

Kyrgyzstan has a stake in a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. We welcome the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to pursue democratic reforms and implement a national development plan for the country. We believe that effectively advancing the Kabul process is important. Kyrgyzstan continues to be of the firm view that lasting solutions to the ongoing problems in Afghanistan and effectively tackling transnational challenges requires a systemic and comprehensive approach. This must include political, economic and humanitarian aspects and calls for joint action by all stakeholders, with the United Nations central among them.

Illegal drug-trafficking and organized crime are a serious barrier to development, not only for Afghanistan but also the entire Central Asian region. Kyrgyzstan therefore views the Afghan problem in the regional context, and we welcome the country's participation in regional projects. In the light of new realities, Kyrgyzstan proposes that the international community step up its attention to Afghanistan, particularly in strengthening border security, assisting and countering illegal drug trafficking, training personnel and taking a broader approach to studying the impact of the growth of terrorist or radical groups.

We believe that any decision to withdraw troops of the International Security Assistance Force from Afghanistan should be taken after the situation there has been tangibly stabilized. The key tasks of training

and genuinely strengthening the Afghan National Army and Police must also be addressed to ensure that they can assume the functions of ensuring the country's security.

Kyrgyzstan favours the effective implementation of the United Nations strategy to combat illegal drug trafficking and transnational crime in Central Asia, and advocates enhanced joint action in this area. The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia should be an important component in the strengthening of regional security. A key outcome of its activities was the crafting of the plan of action for the implementation in the Central Asian region of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, whose adoption is planned to take place before the end of the year.

We are certain that restoring peace and strengthening Government power in Afghanistan depends not only on the use of force but to a great extent on the pace and methods by which social and economic challenges are addressed. We call on the countries of the region and the international community in the framework of the United Nations to modify the long-term economic recovery programme for Afghanistan so that its implementation will involve all neighbouring and adjacent countries.

Cooperation through the New Silk Road initiative is key to the countries of Central Asia is. Kyrgyzstan intends to actively participate in the initiative and in the activities of the various contact groups on Afghanistan with respect to recovery and development.

We believe that this situation can be fundamentally changed by implementing major economic projects in Afghanistan. One such strategic area is the implementation of the Central Asia South Asia Regional Electricity Market Project, or CASA-1000, which provides for the transmission of electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan. On 19 and 20 September, Kyrgyzstan held a meeting of the Intergovernmental Board of CASA-1000 at which a memo of mutual understanding on the electricity transmission project and on further development of the regional electricity market for Central and South Asia. Kyrgyzstan is also participating in the implementation of an international railway project between China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Iran that will undoubtedly contribute

to the social and economic development of Afghanistan and the region in general.

Kyrgyzstan is participating in international efforts to improve the situation in Afghanistan at the bilateral and multilateral levels. In particular, together with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, on 9 July 2010 we began a project for training Afghan customs officials at the customs training centre of the State Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic. We believe it is important to expand our partnership in this area. Our hope is that the planned conferences on Afghanistan in Istanbul and Bonn will define a genuine programme for nation-building for a strong, secure and peaceful Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and your team on your able guidance of the work of the Security Council for the month of September and for convening today's debate.

I would also like to pay my respects to and welcome to the Security Council His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Rassoul, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, who joins us here today. And I offer my appreciation of the briefing by Special Representative Staffan de Mistura and the important work done by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) under his able leadership.

However, before I proceed any further, I would like to speak about and offer a eulogy for that great personage Ustad Burhanuddin Rabbani, who was unfortunately martyred at a time when the world needed him most. For those of us here who were not aware of his contributions, his genius, his capabilities and his immense efforts, he was a person who brought together not only Afghans, but also the people and Government of Pakistan with the people and Government of Afghanistan. I am not terribly sure if there is anyone who can step into his shoes, and I would like to state that we stand by the people of Afghanistan not only in this hour of grief but at this tremendous moment of trial. He was martyred by the enemies of peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Those forces can be defeated only by an even greater resolve for reconciliation and reintegration. A reconciled Afghanistan was his dream until the very last moment of his illustrious life. In fact, he ran back

post-haste from Tehran to Afghanistan to meet this awkward end. He was a person who had a dream and who knew that the long-term solution to security challenges was rooted in effective reconciliation and reintegration. I feel that it is important to bring certain aspects of this to the attention of this assembly of personages in the Security Council.

I will now read from portions of an article by Bashir Ahmad Gwakh of the *Asia Times*, contributed to by Frud Bezhan of Radio Free Afghanistan and its correspondent Zarghona Mangal. Mr. Rabbani was summoned to his home to receive a man bearing a "special message" from Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar. Let there be no doubt about that fact. An eyewitness from the National Directorate of Security (NDS) of Afghanistan who was witness to this gruesome act said that Rahmatullah Wahidyar, a member of the High Peace Council and Deputy Minister in the former Taliban regime, was the one who brought the bomber to meet with Rabbani and with top presidential adviser Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, who was also seriously injured in that day's attack.

Who is Rahmatullah Wahidyar? A document issued by the Security Council itself de-listed him, at a time when I sat here and said before the Council and Mr. De Mistura, "We are de-listing a lot of people. I hope we know what we are doing". Unfortunately, it seems that was not necessarily so. He was de-listed — *vide* a letter dated 18 July 2011 from the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1988 (2011).

The other important aspect of this was that after this gruesome incident — and the revered President Karzai himself has said that it was Mr. Stanekzai who first alerted him that a messenger had arrived in Kabul, bearing an important message from the Taliban — initially, and very interestingly, the Taliban spokesman Mr. Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attack in an interview with Reuters. But as world indignation built up, the same spokesman later wrote in a statement to Radio Free Afghanistan that the group did not know about the incident, which was very pat.

I will then go a step further. This is very interesting; it reminds me of the last part of the film *Casablanca*. Major Strasser has been shot dead: "Round up the usual suspects". Now, the next day, the Balkh provincial Governor, Mr. Atta Mohammad Noor,

tells Radio Free Afghanistan, that it was Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence that was supporting them. I wonder where he got that from in Balkh. Anyway, this was considered very credible by some people, I am sorry to say. But then the NDS intelligence spokesman, Shafiqullah Taheri, said that it was possible that the Quetta Shura was involved. This was a new interdiction. The Quetta Shura is the leadership council of the Afghan Taliban that is believed to be based in Pakistan, which I find very intriguing: how this all shifts into a mould with great ease.

Now it changes again. The same person says our investigations are continuing, despite such major accusations being made. As far as we know, it was a person named Hamidullah Akhund who came to talk to the Peace Council, claiming, and I stress this, to represent the Quetta Shura. That means — conclusion — that the Quetta Shura was involved in the attack.

I have no time for the Quetta Shura or anyone else who propagates violence. But I do wonder why it is in a way moved towards Pakistan in matters that normally become inimicable to my country. I now quote what I have said to the Council itself many times: "the opposition grouping headed by opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah has strongly opposed the idea of negotiating with the Taliban and has characterized the group as unworthy of participating in the Government".

Those are all matters raised by Radio Free Kabul and Mr. Gwakh in the *Asia Times*. I thought it pertinent to read them out before the Council.

Mr. Rabbani's untimely demise must not leave a void. We hope that the Security Council will respect his legacy. We respect the determination of the Afghan Government and its people for a viable and results-oriented reconciliation process. Only an Afghanistan at peace with itself can ensure the security of its own people, assets and visitors. Only when the Afghans are settled will my country, Pakistan, be settled and face less of a security threat than it does today.

The report of the Secretary-General under consideration (S/2011/590) has rightly underlined the need for constructive dialogue and reconciliation while avoiding the politics of mistrust, intimidation, fear or revenge. We agree with that observation. Reconciliation under the threat of coercion or retribution is inferior at best.

Pakistan is working for Afghanistan's security and stability on three distinct layers. First, we have maintained a robust presence of our forces along the international border. We would hope that this is being done on the other side as well. The total number of our troops in paramilitary deployment in the border regions far exceeds the number of international troops in all of Afghanistan.

Secondly, we provide and seek cross-border security and intelligence cooperation in concrete terms. That is done under the auspices of the Tripartite Commission, which also includes the United States and the International Security Assistance Force. Since its inception in 2003 in Islamabad, the Tripartite Commission has met 35 times and remains a potent platform for seeking operational clarity and coordination on the ground.

Thirdly, in terms of multilateral cooperation, we are engaged in a number of important regional initiatives in Afghanistan, with other friendly countries like Iran, Tajikistan, Turkey, the Russian Federation, China, the United States and even Kyrgyzstan. Besides regional connectivity for economic cooperation, security is a common theme of these initiatives. Undertaken at the highest political level, the exchange is credible and meaningful.

In deference to such concrete and comprehensive interactions, we tend to avoid a blame game, even when militants cross over from the other side and attack our troops and innocent civilians. As stated by our Foreign Minister in the general debate at the General Assembly on Tuesday, we must work closely together and as responsible partners in a cooperative manner, and not rush to judgments or question each others' intentions (see A/66/PV.29).

The report of the Secretary-General has rightly pointed out that development, governance and the rule of law are crucial for irreversible transition processes, as envisaged in the Kabul Conference. The Secretary-General has stressed the need for capturing the current political and financial interest in transition to set the country on a sustainable course. He has also underlined the value of long-term international support and private sector investment in facilitating the transition. That has not, despite many words here, quite materialized, and has been the bane of the problem in Afghanistan. These are valid observations that merit serious attention from Afghanistan's international partners.

Pakistan is not oblivious to Afghanistan's developmental needs or the imperatives of a successful implementation of the Kabul process. We will continue our assistance programmes in Afghanistan, the largest that we have with any country at the moment, being the State that we are, despite our serious resource constraints. We have also offered assistance in capacity-building for Afghan security forces.

We are still hosts to millions of Afghan refugees, at very considerable cost to us. The present report on the situation in Afghanistan does not update us on the refugee situation. We hope it will do so in the next report. We hope that the international community will remain cognizant of Pakistan's problems.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Serrano.

Mr. Serrano: I wish to convey the thanks of the European Union (EU) for having been invited to participate in this debate.

The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Iceland, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

I would like to thank Special Representative Staffan de Mistura for his briefing, and the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2011/590). Our thanks also go out to His Excellency Foreign Minister Zalmai Rassoul for his important presentation.

At the outset, let me reiterate how much importance we attach to the United Nations efforts in Afghanistan, especially those of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The work of the United Nations will remain vital to Afghanistan's fate for years to come. That is why we all have to continue to support it, both politically and financially. The European Union itself is also in it for the long haul — hence our long-term partnership with Afghanistan that is currently under preparation.

In July, concrete transition began with the handover of security responsibility from the International Security Assistance Force to Afghan

forces in seven areas of the country. Elsewhere, preparations are under way for more such security transfers. We are encouraged by how well the Afghan Security Forces have assumed their new role despite the difficult context. That context should serve to strengthen the international community's resolve to contribute to the success of the transition by effectively training these forces.

During the previous Afghanistan debate in the Council (see S/PV.6574), we noted with concern that insecurity was on the rise, making transition harder. Those concerns have not abated. The level of civilian casualties, the vast majority caused by insurgents, remains unacceptably high. Civilians are no longer safe from anti-Government forces, even in hospitals and mosques. Recent months have also witnessed the violent deaths of several high-ranking Afghan officials and, just last week, of Mr. Rabbani, the Chair of the High Peace Council.

I wish to reiterate the European Union's firm condemnation of this heinous attack and convey our condolences. Mr. Rabbani's legacy can best be honoured by redoubling reconciliation efforts. We applaud the Government for committing precisely to such efforts.

Against this security background, it is all the more encouraging that the Kabul process is, in many respects, gaining momentum. The European Union would particularly like to commend efforts towards resolving the Kabul Bank crisis and progress towards resuming the International Monetary Fund programme. Successfully tackling the final outstanding issues ahead of the Bonn Conference is crucial to bolstering the confidence of donors, including the European Union and its member States, as they seek to do their part in the context of the Kabul process.

Among other hopeful signs, we have seen a number of national priority programmes move forward, including in the area of justice reform. We welcome what has been achieved in that particular area. After all, independent and professional justice institutions are indispensable. Afghanistan needs them for a better security climate, a better investment climate and a better human rights climate. Legislation will remain void without the institutions to implement it.

Afghanistan's commitments to international human rights conventions are a case in point. On human rights, let me say that the rights of women

deserve special attention, during transition and beyond. That is exactly why we need female leaders around the table as we prepare for Bonn.

Small steps forward on some national priority programmes should not be allowed to give rise to complacency. The transition process will be viable only if all national priority programmes move forward together. In the area of governance, such positive steps as the launch of the anti-corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee need to be backed up with structural measures that will bring down corruption and bring about more transparency and accountability with regard to public finances.

There can be no accountability without parliamentary control. That is why we urge the Afghan Parliament to fully resume its functions. This means getting important legislative work done and providing the necessary checks and balances when it comes to State-building in Afghanistan. New legislation should thus be submitted for parliamentary approval. There is room for improvement here, and it is in this context that the European Union stands ready to support Afghan commitments to long-term electoral reform.

Of course we need to look beyond Kabul to the provinces and districts and sub-national governance. We need to strengthen the capacity and accountability of provincial and municipal institutions. Only then will the right services be delivered to the right people in the right way. Also, to get their fair share of aid, provinces and districts should have a better connection to the centre. After all, in a post-transition Afghanistan, funds will increasingly be channelled through the central Government.

Now that I have spoken about Kabul and the local level, I want to briefly address the regional context. The neighbouring countries have a strong stake in and a special responsibility for a stable and secure Afghanistan. Building on our ongoing programmes, the European Union stands ready to throw its weight behind initiatives that promote regional integration and cooperation. We look forward to the upcoming Istanbul Conference, which represents an opportunity to give new impetus to the regional agenda ahead of the Bonn Conference. The New Silk Road initiative, launched just last week, offers a vision for promising economic cooperation from which Afghanistan and its neighbours could benefit greatly.

The Afghan people — most of whom are poor and many of whom are currently threatened by drought — need to see concrete improvements in their lives and livelihoods. We all need to play our part in that. As the late Mr. Rabbani said at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations:

"The combination of extreme poverty with extreme inequality within and between countries is an affront to our common humanity, a tragic situation which requires urgent global solidarity." (A/55/PV.7, p.11)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Mr. Staffan de Mistura to respond to the comments that have been made.

Mr. De Mistura: If Minister Rassoul will allow me, I will say that both Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) feel highly hopeful, from what I have been hearing in this meeting. This body is providing support for the future of Afghanistan — in spite of the tragic events that have occurred — and for the work of UNAMA, as well as for continuing cooperation between the Mission and the country. That support is going to help both of us when we return to Kabul, as I will tomorrow. That would be my only comment.

I would like to say a word about Lebanon, for which I have great affection as I myself was posted there. As have many other speakers, I wish to say how pleased I am to see Lebanon holding the presidency of this body.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

Thank you, Mr. President. I wish you every success and may God bless you and grant you health and serenity.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. De Mistura for his kind words towards Lebanon.

The representative of Afghanistan has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Rassoul (Afghanistan): I wish to thank all members of the Council for their expressions of sympathy and condolence on the martyrdom of Mr. Rabbani. I would like also to report that a serious investigation is being conducted to find out how the assassination happened. Of course, when we have the final results, we will notify the Council.

(*spoke in French*)

Allow me, on behalf of my people and Government, to thank the members of the Council and the representatives of the countries that are friends of Afghanistan for their lasting support and commitment to my country. With their support, Afghanistan will play an essential role in the peace, stability and prosperity of the region, and will contribute to global peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6626th meeting

Friday, 30 September 2011, 10 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
<i>Members:</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbačić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2011/549)

Letter dated 21 September 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2011/591)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2011/549)

Letter dated 21 September 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2011/591)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Under rule 37 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/595, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Nigeria, Portugal and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/549, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to documents S/2011/591 and S/2011/602, which contain an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2010 (2011).

I now give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Duale (Somalia): First and foremost, Mr. President, I have the honour to reiterate to you my Prime Minister's congratulations, which he expressed in his statement at the Security Council's meeting on Somalia on Wednesday 14 September (see S/PV.6614).

While I thank the Security Council for having unanimously adopted resolution 2010 (2011), I must say a few words, as we still have some concerns.

In a recent report on Somalia (S/2011/277), in the letter contained in document S/2011/591 and in his 30 August report (S/2011/549), the Secretary-General expresses concern about the critical gaps that remain in the United Nations support package for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which continue to adversely impact the Mission's effectiveness.

As most members of the Security Council are aware, the Somali security forces are overextended at present and contained to Mogadishu. It is therefore of the utmost urgency to enlarge and improve the capabilities of the Somali armed forces and police. Furthermore, as the Secretary-General has also stated, in order to consolidate and build on recent security gains it is essential to also enlarge AMISOM forces. There is positive reference to that need in resolution 2010 (2011).

My Government also fully endorses and supports the request made by the African Union Peace and Security Council in its 13 September communiqué. I very much wish that the Security Council, in the resolution adopted today, had taken due consideration of and positively act on that request.

My Prime Minister has already thanked the Security Council for the continued generous support it has given both to the Transitional Federal Government and Institutions and to the AMISOM peace support mission, without whose assistance much of the progress that we have made recently would not have been possible. It is high time that the Security Council looked into this issue once again, and that it not wait another six months or one year.

Finally, on behalf of my Government, I wish to pay tribute to the Governments of Burundi and Uganda for their continued sacrifice and steadfast commitment to the cause of peace in Somalia. We also extend our most sincere condolences to the families of those

valiant brothers who have lost their lives in the fight for peace, security and stability in Somalia. I hope that the Security Council will act in the near future on our request.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.